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The purpose of this research was to study new principals' experiences during their participation in the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model. The study revolved around the new principals' perceptions and reflections on how well the model prepared them for the journey of the first year(s) of the principalship.

Data were gathered from current and former Guilford County Schools principals who experienced the coaching model within the first five years of the program. Principals participated in a survey and interviews reflecting on their experience with the coaching model. The coaching model's directors were also interviewed to provide additional background information.

The evidence shows that coaching did have a positive impact on the perceived success level of new principals during their first year(s) on the job. Despite the issues that principals had with aspects of the coaching model, the overall experience provided them with a sense of success and confidence. From the data, the experience and knowledge of their coaches, as well as the trust and confidentiality brought to the relationship between both parties, made the most impact on the success felt by the principals. Principals also discussed the insufficient time they had with their coaches. Many of the participants expressed

issues with the amount of time to meet with their coach and the time they had with their coach (one academic year versus two years).

THROUGH THEIR EYES: PERCEPTIONS OF THE GUILFORD COUNTY
SCHOOLS COACHING MODEL FOR NEW PRINCIPALS
AT THE TIME OF COACHING

by

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Approved by

Committee Chair

This dissertation is dedicated to my daughter, Brooke Elizabeth Ferrell.
You are my inspiration, my reason for being and the sunshine in my life.

APPROVAL PAGE

This dissertation, written by Michael Joe Ferrell, has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of The Graduate School at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Teacher mentoring programs have been a staple in education for new teachers beginning their journey in education for many years (National Council on Teacher Quality, 2007). The benefits of mentoring programs for teachers have been documented and studies have shown what works and what does not work in these programs (Little, 1990). Mentoring/coaching programs for new principals, however, are far less prevalent, according to educational research (Bloom, 1999).

Mentoring/coaching programs for new principals are a fairly new concept. The realization of the need for such programs came about in the late 1980s and early 1990s, but the creation of these programs just come about in the last 10 years (Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006; Olson, 2007). Before the time of mentoring/coaching programs, a new principal's time was concentrated on personnel management, interactions with students, and observations of teachers (Bugbee, 2006).

Today, in the wake of high-stakes testing, new principals face a more daunting task of being instructional leaders while continuing to manage the building (Olson, 2007; Bloom, 1999). Today's school leaders are expected to function as education professor, teacher supervisor, budget manager, counselor,

local politician, social worker, disciplinarian, visionary, assistant custodian, and bureaucrat (Bloom, 1999). With the assistance of mentors/coaches, new principals should be better equipped to handle everyday situations that would otherwise plague first-year principals and consume their time. Unfortunately, there is not much data on mentoring programs due to the fact that many of them are too new or not developed well enough to collect reliable data.

Before 2000, only Kentucky and West Virginia had mandated mentoring programs for people entering into the principalship for the first time (Olson, 2007). Today, nearly half of the states require that mentoring programs be established to assist new principals to become acclimated in their roles as leaders of their schools (Olson, 2007). National principals' organizations and legislation call for induction programs for novice principals to be created with the emphasis on mentoring (Bloom, Castagna, & Warren, 2004).

My personal conversations with both novice and experienced principals regarding their first year or two on the job continuously reveal that they function within a "sink or swim" mentality. Those conversations also reveal that many of them do not feel supported or successful during their first years. The same principals often described their experience as demanding, surprising, and overwhelming. Bloom (1999) noted that principals make a very large number of decisions in a day, and any one of those decisions can derail even the most experienced principal but particularly an inexperienced one who does not feel supported and is left to the overwhelming feeling of "sink or swim." Principals

today are faced with decisions regarding *No Child Left Behind*, Adequate Yearly Progress, human resources, student discipline, ABC Growth, hiring of new staff members, professional development, and many other important components of running a successful school (Bloom, 1999; Olson, 2007). The day-to-day decision-making process can be a daunting task for principals with years of experience but utterly overwhelming to a new or inexperienced principal.

While colleges and universities continuously strive to prepare future administrators for the work ahead of them, it is nearly impossible to expose these students to the host of situations that can and will arise during their first year, and beyond, as a school principal (Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006). Fortunately, most school administrators dive into their first experience in school leadership as an Assistant Principal. Depending upon their experience in that position and the skills with which their principal worked with them, this experience could lead to a more or less successful first year when they make the decision to enter into the principalship (Holloway, 2004). Most of my conversations with new or inexperienced principals reveal that they do not find that their time as an Assistant Principal truly prepared them for becoming a principal. After many conversations with new principals in Guilford County and reflecting upon my own experiences as a new principal, I became interested in learning how novice principals in the Guilford County school system experienced the coaching model in place to support them as they began their journey into the principalship.

Purpose of the Study

This research investigated how new principals experienced the coaching program for new principals within the Guilford County School system, located in Greensboro, North Carolina. By researching the impact of using a coaching model with new principals, school districts would have a resource to use in helping new principals during their first year in the principalship. This study could help school districts in creating a successful program based on the data collected during this study and to gain a more in-depth understanding of the coaching experience of new principals.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study.

1. From their own perspectives, what experiences did/do novice principals have during their involvement with the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model?
2. How did/do novice principals feel about their coaching experience, their self-perceived level of success during year one, and their readiness for future successful years?

I decided to use the real name of the school district for this dissertation due to the unique construction of the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model. As a former new principal within this district, I believed that interviewing principals who had experienced the coaching model would provide insightful data as to how this specific program operated but also met the needs of its new principals

through coaching. By helping future principals and coaches gain personal reflective insight into the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model, participants could directly impact changes in the coaching model that would affect future new principals within Guilford County. The decision to use Guilford County Schools was approved through the UNCG IRB and GCS Research Review Committee.

Significance of Study

By utilizing the information provided by the participants, beneficial coaching programs could improve to meet the demanding needs of new principals. Without giving novice principals the assistance they need to undertake the demands of a school during the first year, school districts face the principal for failure. School districts need well-constructed coaching programs to help novice principals navigate the rough waters of the first year of the principalship (Bloom, 1999). This study would be beneficial for any person involved in a novice principal mentoring or coaching program, or for school districts in the process of beginning a coaching program. The information provided accesses first-hand experiences of novice principals and what they experienced during the time involved with the coaching model. The data gathered would educate novice principals and coaches of possible strategies to use and also make suggestions to the model director(s) for changes that need to be implemented to make the coaching model more beneficial to participants. For school districts in the process of implementing coaching for new principals, the information provided would serve as guidance for strategies that work, how to

implement a coaching model and the importance of pairing coaches with the new principal. This study also would assist school districts that currently have a mentoring or coaching program in making changes to their program to better meet the needs of their new principals.

Summary

From conducting this study, I hoped to educate myself more about what options are available for novice principals so that the “sink or swim” feeling should never be experienced. It is the duty and responsibility of school districts to put into place coaching models that will support novice principals during their first year/s in the job. Without the support, both the school and the novice principal suffer the consequences of the school district’s decision to not give assistance. The interviews conducted shed light on how the coaching model works and how beneficial it is for novice principals. By analyzing the surveys from all the novice principals and first-hand accounts of the eight novice principals and the three coaching model directors, I anticipated finding how the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model was beneficial for principals in the first years.

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine how novice principals experience the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model. The dissertation begins with a general rationale for conducting research on this topic. Then in Chapter II, pertinent literature relating to various mentoring and coaching programs is reviewed. There is also some discussion as to whether or not

inexperienced principals find the programs to be beneficial. The literature provides background information pertinent to demonstrating the evolution of new principal programs from mentoring programs to coaching. Chapter III continues with a discussion of the specific research questions I utilized and a description of the methodology I selected for use in conducting this research study. Chapter IV presents an analysis of the data collected during the research study as framed as significant phrases and statements clustered into four distinct themes. Chapter V concludes the dissertation. I offer a brief summary of the research questions as they relate to the literature and data, future implications, and future research suggestions.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

I once heard it said that the best plan a principal can have for the day is to simply show up in the morning. I find that, with each passing school year, this is an increasingly true statement. The number of hats worn by principals today is many. They are expected to manage the building, hire and support staff, find alternatives for students with varied needs, keep parents and other stakeholders informed and satisfied with what is going on at the school, and a wide range of other duties and responsibilities. All of this occurs while they are acting as an instructional leader focused on effective teaching and learning for all students. Is this a task that can be accomplished?

In talking with many experienced principals, I have discovered that they believe the job is becoming more and more difficult to accomplish, even with years of experience. So how can a new principal have any hope of being successful? Are the successful ones natural leaders who get into the job and hit the ground running making a difference in their school right from the start? Likely not. It is more likely that new principals will need time to learn and grow in order to become successful in a job that can be overwhelming and frustrating, especially when the demand to be successful immediately is so high. The right

kind of support is the best way for new principals to navigate the first years on the job and become successful.

Bugbee (2006) notes, “apprenticeship—in modern terms, mentoring—is still one of the best methods of educating and preparing someone for a new career or occupation” (p. 22). However, it is clear from the literature that, until very recently, support programs for new principals during their first years on the job were few. Although a slight shift to providing mentors for new principals began in the 1990s, the number and effectiveness of mentoring and coaching programs was still severely lacking, while the demand and need for such programs remained high in the opinion of new principals and those in charge of new principals (Baker, 2010; Godwin et al., 2005; Holloway, 2004; Olson, 2007; Reiss, 2012; Wise & Hammack, 2011). Kafka (2009) noted:

Current studies and reports on the principalship often contrast the work of school principals today to that of school principals in the past and claim that the school principalship in the 21st century is, or needs to be, radically different from what it once was. (p. 318)

Although there were downsides associated with the once limited number of mentoring and coaching programs available to new principals nationwide, there were some effective programs early on that were beneficial to not only the new principal, but to the mentors and coaches involved with the programs and the school districts that provided the programs (Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006; Bloom, 1999; Holloway, 2004; Silver, Lochmiller, Copland, & Tripp, 2009). More recent research indicates a rise in the frequency and depth of mentoring and

coaching programs for school administrators, in particular building principals (Hall, 2008; Reiss, 2003; Villani, 2006; Wise & Hammack, 2011). However, there still remains the false impression that principals do not need the support during their first years of the principalship (Bossi, 2008; Kafka, 2009). Feelings of isolation still persist in the role of the principal (Stevenson & Bauer, 2010). Even in today's world of higher accountability for student achievement, principals still rarely receive constructive feedback on their performance as a new principal (Huff, Preston, & Goldring, 2013). However, there are a number of mentoring and coaching programs that have the components necessary to support and guide new principals in performing their duties effectively so that both they and their schools are successful.

The Need for Mentoring and Coaching Programs

“The mentoring process should be a journey of discovery, in which veteran principals lead new principals to reflect before making decisions” (Brown, 2005, p. 18). A 2003 Public Agenda report showed that “52 percent of principals felt that the mentoring and guidance that they received from colleagues was their most valuable preparation” (Brown, 2005, p. 22). Three-fourths of the participants in a statewide mentoring program in Ohio ranked mentors as the most crucial component of the program and the success of their principalship (Holloway, 2004). In her interviews, Dukess noted that the greatest benefit of the program to the participants was having someone to talk with and consult for advice, thus lessening their feelings of isolation (Dukess, 2001).

In a 2009 study following principals from the Program for New Principals, participants felt that coaching was a positive addition to induction experience (Silver et al., 2009). Mentoring and coaching for new principals is paramount due to new principals stating that their primary source of assistance in becoming a successful leader is through a mentor/coach, as opposed to coursework from a university (Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006; Psencik, 2011). Too often, new principals are overwhelmed with problems and situations for which their college training did not prepare them. Most new principals feel that their preparation programs have fallen short of giving them the skills and knowledge required to meet the challenges of today's schools (Davis et al., 2005; Fox, 2009). With principal certification programs and professional development practices coming under fire due to the lack of principal preparedness for the job, school districts and the principals themselves are looking for ways to supplement knowledge not gained in preparation programs (Huff et al., 2013; Stevenson, 2009). Reiss (2003) stated:

It's easy to acquire the content knowledge needed to lead schools. It's not easy to change who we are to acquire the personal traits necessary for success. (p. 16)

In addition, school districts need to also consider the benefit of mentoring and coaching to the district. Too often those [district leaders] responsible for principals may hold an unstated belief that leaders should know what to do—that hiring the right person by definition means that the person is skilled (Bambrick-

Santoyo, 2012; Bossi, 2008; Psencik, 2011). What school districts fail to realize when new principals have had success as teachers and even assistant principals, the principalship is a new challenge for these leaders (Bossi, 2008; Villani, 2006).

New principals who participate in successful coaching or mentoring programs were more likely to remain in the district and continue to improve their performance on the job (Psencik, 2011). In the wake of high-stakes testing and accountability, fewer people are joining the ranks of the principalship (Reiss, 2003). On average, principal tenures lasting between one and three years have become the norm (Bossi, 2008). In addition, due to the onset of large numbers of principals retiring in recent years and failing principal accreditation programs, it has become a challenge to school districts to find highly qualified applicants (Ellison & Hayes, 2006; Knapp, Copland, & Talbert, 2003). Putting in place resources such as time and money that could ensure the success of new principals would lead to higher student achievement and efficient leaders (Robertson, 2011). The creation of successful, meaningful mentoring programs in school districts would alleviate most problems that first-time principals face. This conclusion led to one major question/focus for research: "What are the components of a meaningful mentoring/coaching program for new principals that will successfully support them in their first year on the job?" Chapter III continues with the outline and description of how I designed the study to explore this

fundamental question. The chapter also discusses the methodology of the study, including participant selection and the collection of data in further detail.

An Overview of Mentoring Programs

The concept of mentoring for new principals is a relatively new idea when compared to such programs for new teachers and in professions outside education. Mentoring is defined by David Clutterbuck in his book *Everyone Needs a Mentor* (as stated in Whitmore, 2009):

In spite of the variety of definitions of mentoring, all the experts and communicators appear to agree that it has its origins in the concept of apprenticeship, when a more experienced individual passed down his knowledge of how the task was done and how to operate in the commercial world. (p. 13)

The realization of the need for these mentoring programs came about as early as the late 1980s and early 1990s, but the creation of these programs has just come about in the last 15 years (Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006; Olson, 2007). Mentoring programs, if in existence, consisted of experienced principals being assigned a new principal and given little or no training on how to help the first-year principal (Bugbee, 2006). Today, in the wake of high-stakes testing, new principals face a more daunting task of being instructional leaders while continuing to manage their buildings. The complexity and variety of demands and expectations placed upon school leaders has never been greater (Baker, 2010; Bloom, 1999; Davis, Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, & Meyerson, 2005; Ellison & Hayes, 2006; Oksana, Zepeda, & Bengtson, 2012). All of the things expected of a novice principal are

vital to the success of a school, but with the assistance of mentors, new principals might be better equipped to handle everyday situations that would otherwise plague a first-year principal and consume their time.

Before 2000, only Kentucky and West Virginia had mandated mentoring programs for people entering into the principalship for the first time (Olson, 2007). By 2007, more than half of the states required that mentoring programs be established in assisting new principals in becoming acclimated to their role as leader of the school (Olson, 2007). National principals' organizations and new legislation also called for induction programs for novice principals to be created with an emphasis on mentoring (Bloom et al., 2004).

In several instances, the mentoring program itself actually hindered rather than helped a new principal (Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006). Such programs were not tailored to develop principals capable of driving better teaching and learning in their schools (Olson, 2007). State and district mentoring programs typically resulted in a "buddy system" or a "check-list of exercises" rather than helping new principals improve teaching and learning in their schools (Olson, 2007). A report by the Wallace Foundation in 2007 titled *Getting Principal Mentoring Right: Lessons from the Field* provided five quality guidelines for states and districts to consider in strengthening mentoring programs:

1. training for mentors should be of high quality
2. training for mentors should include conflict management, goal setting, active listening, and providing feedback

3. meaningful information/data about the efficacy of the mentoring program and whether new leaders actually change as a result of mentoring should be gathered
4. the appropriate length of time the mentor and mentee should be paired should be considered
5. funding sources should be considered

It was noted in the report that in states that require mentoring for new principals, almost half of them made no specific provision for training (Olson, 2007). This left states and districts with the difficult task of properly ensuring that new principals are given the support needed to be successful. Many times, veteran principals were chosen because they had sufficient experience on the job to be able to assist a new principal. However, due to the lack of adequate training to become a successful mentor and time for learning the skills needed to be successful in their interactions with their protégé, the relationship sometimes led to new principals over-relying on their mentors for assistance (Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006; Oksana et al., 2012). Also, school districts assumed that new principals come out of their preparation programs with all the skills necessary to effectively run a school. This could be part of what has led to school districts not creating programs sufficient to fulfill the needs of new principals or not creating these programs at all. Several mentoring programs also suffered due to the lack of funding for the program and/or the lack in clear goals and expectations for the program (Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006; Hall, 2008; Psencik, 2011).

Benefits of Mentoring Programs

Many principals have been quoted as saying that most, if not all, of their knowledge came through “on the job” training, meaning that they had little or no guidance on how to perform the functions of their job when they started (Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006; Holloway, 2004). A good mentoring program should alleviate some of that “on-the-job” training that so many first time principals experience. Mentors, first and foremost, are there to assist new principals in assuming their new roles as the leader of their school (Archer, 2006). Beyond that thought though, the benefits of having a mentor as a new principal extend much further. Mentors can help create principals who are confident in their professional competence, able to translate educational theory into practice, and improve their communication skills by creating informal networks with other administrators (Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006; Gallegos, 1999). The mentoring process may give a first year principal a confidant who understands his/her needs. This crucial factor in the mentor/protégé relationship can help lessen the all too common feelings of isolation that a new principal typically experiences (Brown, 2005). This builds a relationship based on confidentiality and trust between the mentor and protégé that could lead to the success of a new principal.

New principals, however, are not the only ones to benefit from the creation of a successful mentoring program. Mentors state that they too have benefited from successful mentor/protégé pairings. Mentors have noted an increase in job

satisfaction and greater peer recognition and advancement in their careers (Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006). The mentoring experience also often creates seasoned school leaders who become better listeners and questioners. Mentors have experienced personal and professional growth alongside their protégé (Brown, 2005). For example, the National Principals Mentoring Certification Program (NPMCP) is a yearlong program that is designed to train current principals in becoming successful mentors who assist in guiding and supporting new principals. Participants of the NPMCP noted that they (the participants) have benefited as much or more than their protégés (Brown, 2005). Mentor participants of the NPMCP exit the mentoring experience with a true understanding of the process, learning goals, and relationship responsibilities of an effective mentorship (Hall, 2008).

School districts and/or states that create successful mentoring programs have an advantage over systems where programs are not as successful or non-existent. Successful mentoring programs create more capable administrative staff members who demonstrate greater productivity, higher motivation to do well on the job, and higher self-esteem (Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006). In the long run, successful new principals who are able to “swim,” lead to greater student achievement gains and overall improved school performance (Archer, 2006).

Examples of Principal Mentoring Programs

Over the years, several principal mentoring programs across the United States have had documented success in developing competent, effective

principals. The Iowa Administrator Mentoring and Induction (IAMI) Program was a two year pilot program started in 2002 for new principals and superintendents that focused on strategic recruitment, selection, and pairing of mentors with novice administrators, a comprehensive training program for mentors, development of training materials, and ongoing program assessment (Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006). The first year of the program was composed of 62 participants consisting of new elementary and secondary principals, new superintendents, and elementary, secondary, and superintendent mentors. The 2003–04 year of the program expanded the number of participants to 111.

To document the success or failure of the IAMI program, mentors and protégés were required to attend regional and statewide meetings that covered specific topics such as diversity and school culture. Mentors also received training in the areas of mentor responsibility, reflective questioning, and adult motivation. Protégés and mentors were asked to complete several activities such as reflection logs, written and audio journals, and professional growth plans. At the end of each year, participants were asked to complete a formal assessment of the program, where most respondents, both protégé and mentor, according to the formal assessment, found contact with their mentoring partner to be fairly, if not highly, beneficial (Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006). The main concerns expressed by mentors and protégés were the creation of a frequent face-to-face schedule for both parties to meet, mentors being responsible for initial contact, and mentor-protégé pairings needing to be closer geographically

(Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006). Protégés stated the greatest virtue of their mentors was their availability to listen, provide different perspectives, ask reflective questions, and provide general support throughout the year (Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006). The establishment of networks and relationships between other administrative personnel were of more value to the new principals than additional learning about specific skills such as budgeting and staff evaluations (Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006).

Overall, both mentors and protégés were satisfied with the program and found the program to be beneficial. At the end of the two years, participants in the IAMI program produced numerous recommendations that, if implemented, would create a more successful mentoring program. The recommendations included implementation of the program at the beginning of the school year, training for mentors and protégés concurrently, more time for professional reflection, and selection of mentor/protégé pairings that account for geographic proximity, shared style of thinking, and gender (Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006). In Iowa today, the program is sponsored by the School Administrators of Iowa (SAI) and is a one-year program that focuses on mentoring, professional development, and resources for new administrators (Iowa Department of Education, 2013).

Other states have followed suit with the idea of creating meaningful, successful programs. Arizona, Alaska, and Missouri have all created mandatory mentoring programs. Missouri's mentoring program requires all new principals to spend 66 hours over their first 24 months on the job working with a veteran

administrator approved by the state (Archer, 2006). Today, all three states continue their commitment to supporting new principals by expanding their programs to include principals still completing their administration degrees and experienced principals (Alaska Administrator Coaching Project, 2013; Arizona Educational Foundation, 2013; Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2013).

Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, and Pennsylvania have sought assistance in creating such programs from the National Institute for School Leadership (NISL; Archer, 2006). The institute is designed to train new principals for the rigors, such as strategic planning, that come with the job. The Principals Advisory Leadership Services (PALS) Institute offers a mentoring program by the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and NOVA Southeastern University (Bugbee, 2006). This program, created in 2002, assigns new principals coaches, and both coaches and protégés interact via monthly online chat sessions and write monthly reaction papers (Brown, 2005; Bugbee, 2006). The mentors are trained in ways to effectively mentor new principals during their first difficult year (Brown, 2005).

Today, Pennsylvania and Massachusetts have both shown tremendous growth in academic achievement from students in schools where new principals have participated in programs developed by NISL. In Pennsylvania, schools whose principal participated in the NISL's Executive Development Program averaged 9.48% better on reading and math tests than schools that did not

participate (Nunnary, Yen, & Ross, 2011). In Massachusetts, similar results were found. On average, schools whose principal participated with NISL showed an additional month of learning occurring in both math and reading than with schools not participating (Nunnery, Ross, Chappell, & Houg-Carhart, 2011). Essentially, schools with NISL-participating principals are more effective when teaching students.

In the wake of states creating successful, meaningful mentoring programs, boards of education and associations are also constructing mentoring programs conducive to the needs of their new principals. The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), which encompasses all states east of Texas and south of Maryland, developed a system-wide process of mentoring (Hall, 2008). The mentoring process actually starts when new principals are completing their final internship with a college or university. That mentor then carries over with the first-year principal and continues the process. Each state has its own process that follows the idea of the mentoring program with the same goals. Some of the requirements asked of participants differ from state to state. The overall goal is to generate successful principals capable of leading schools. Today, the SREB continues to support new and upcoming principals through their learning-centered leadership program (SREB, 2013). The SREB focuses on working with new principals as they complete their administration degree and transition into their first years of principalship through a four-pronged program that prepares

principals for improving curriculum, instruction and student achievement (SREB, 2013).

To assist new principals in the San Francisco Unified School District, the New Principal's Cohort was created to assist with acclimatization to the role of new school leader. The cohort is led by two supervisors and convenes once a month to discuss topics such as evaluations and site plans that are vital for success (Gallegos, 1999). Veteran principals, with their chosen area of expertise, would be presenters for those meetings.

The Principal Leadership Academy for new principals in the Camden, New Jersey City Public Schools District was created with the help of Rutgers University, the Princeton Leadership Group, and the Leadership Transformation Group (Knox, 2005). The program's effort focuses on research that connects principal involvement in the school to curriculum acceptance, student achievement, and teacher satisfaction (Knox, 2005).

The Washoe County School District (WCSD) created the WCSD Principal's Academy, which provides a 10-tier approach to the recruitment and development of novice and distinguished school principals, including a formal mentoring component (Hall, 2008). The program is a collaboration between the Washoe County School District, the University of Nevada, the University of Phoenix, the University of Pittsburgh, and the San Francisco-based education research think-tank WestEd (Harris, 2006). The program actually starts with the training and education that new principals receive as they are still enrolled in a

university or college. Through the program, active and retired principals provide services to new principals in the form of mentoring. Some mentors offer a coaching approach and personal assistance; others work one-on-one with new principals (Harris, 2006). A select group of mentors assist selected schools with their school improvement process and help identify strengths and areas of need, while other mentors who work with specific skills serve as instructors in the Principals' Academy workshops (Harris, 2006). Mentors meet on a monthly basis to discuss strategies and methods that can be used to create effective mentoring.

The Albuquerque Public Schools created a program titled "Extra Support for Principals (ESP)" which has produced tremendous results for the district (Hall, 2008). ESP is completely voluntary and each team is able to institute its own program schedule. The program was created in 1994 by a group of elementary, middle, and high school principals facing the upcoming shortage of qualified principal candidates, several of which would be new to the principalship (Weingartner, 2001). The steering committee behind ESP wanted to make the first year as a principal as successful as possible. Thus, ESP was created with the intent of creating successful new principals with a strong, organized mentoring program (Weingartner, 2001).

During the course of the year, only three activities are deemed mandatory for the mentor and the new principal: a get-acquainted/orientation meeting in October and three-hour combination luncheon/in-service meetings in December

and March. The program provides monthly newsletters and handbooks to mentors and mentees that provide helpful tips from experienced principals (Weingartner, 2001). From the data that have been received, the program is an overall success. Carl Weingarter is the coordinator for the Extra Support for Principals program and wrote the article titled *Albuquerque Principals Have ESP*, which provides data on the ESP program. The following data was collected from annual evaluations of the program. From mentoring principals, 100% of participants recommended that new principals participate in ESP and 67% stated that they (the mentors) would recommend new principals to be required to participate. All of the mentors recommended that experienced principals participate in the program as mentors. Fifty-nine percent of the mentors believed that their mentees have benefited from the program, and 59% felt that their mentors' leadership skills have improved. From the new principals, 84% of the participants believe they benefited from the ESP program and 84% felt that their mentor had helped them become effective leaders. Ninety-five percent of new principals recommended that other new principals should participate in the ESP program, while 58% said that new principals should be required to participate in the ESP program. The data show how a non-mandated program can be successful for new principals.

Coaching Programs Versus Mentoring Programs

“A good coach helps athletes recognize the previously unseen possibilities that lay embedded in their existing circumstances” (Hargrove, as cited in Lovely,

2004, p. 11). This statement comes from Robert Hargrove, author of *Masterful Coaching*. The coaching that he is concerned with, however, is in terms of athletic competition. On the same note, the aim of new principal coaching programs should be the same. Kee, Anderson, Dearing, Harris and Shuster (2010) in their book *Results Coaching: The New Essential for School Leaders* explain how coaching for principal success is like athletic coaching:

We have incredible stories of amazing coaches who influenced and motivated others to incredible results. We bring that spirit, energy, passion and knowledge to our new role of “thinking” coach in schools, a mindset that believes deeply in the potential of others and believes that hard change is possible if we provide time and structure for focus, repetition, reflection, and reflective feedback. (p. 10)

A good coach works with athletes so that they can reach their potential. New principals need to experience “coaching” to be able to reach their full potential in much the same way.

In most principal mentoring programs, the mentor is someone within the same school system who assists the new principal. That mentor, however, is most likely a seasoned administrator who has the duties of their own school to be concerned with handling. The mentor is more of a person a new principal can talk to, but if an immediate need arises, is not much help due to the mentor not being able to get away from his or her own job duties. Mentors are usually tied to their own demanding jobs, and though they may have the best of intentions, they are not fully available to their protégés (Bloom et al., 2004).

Both mentoring and coaching programs have similar goals and aspirations to ensure the success of new principals. However, coaching programs are designed for greater success due to one very crucial factor—the coach. Establishing trust, assessment and feedback, goal-setting, action planning and continuous support are typical foundations for coaching relationships (Huff et al., 2013). Bossi (2008) stated when discussing the differences between mentoring and coaching:

Leadership coaching is an individualized, situational, goal-oriented, professional relationship focused on the development of leadership which takes into account the circumstances and the most essential challenges of today and develops the ability of the coachee to successfully master the challenges of tomorrow. (p. 35)

Traditionally for many years, coaching in its application has been limited to the business world. However, the research pertaining to educational leadership coaching and success of such programs is emerging (Baker, 2010; Huff et al., 2013; Lubinsky, 2002; Wise & Hammack, 2011). With the principalship becoming more complex with each passing year, some school systems have turned to the practices and successes of coaching in business and are applying the fundamentals in the world of education (Allison-Napolitano, 2013; Reiss, 2003, 2007, 2012; Wise & Hammack, 2011). The International Coaching Federation (as stated in Reiss, 2012) defines coaching as:

Coaching is an ongoing relationship which focuses on the client taking action toward the realization of their visions, goals, or desires. Coaching uses a process of inquiry and personal discovery to build the client's level

of awareness and responsibility and provides the client with structure, support and feedback. The coaching process helps clients define and achieve professional and personal goals faster and with more ease than would be possible otherwise. (p. 4)

Reiss (2012) defined coaching as a list of is and is nots:

Coaching is not advice giving. Coaching is a partnership. Coaching is nonjudgmental. Coaching challenges assumptions and limiting thoughts. Coaching is about discovery. Coaching reveals obstacles and addresses them. Coaching has a bias towards action and results. (p. 68)

Coaching, first and foremost, alleviates the problem with coaches not being able to be free of job duties. Coaches are people who are involved with the coaching program itself or retired principals who are not involved with the new principal's school system (Psencik, 2011; Reiss, 2007). The most effective coaches are generally outsiders, who, while professional experts, have leadership coaching as their primary work (Bloom et al., 2004). To be considered a coach, coaches must possess substantial successful site administrative experience, or held similar leadership positions, have been responsible for raising student achievement and contain a high level of coaching competency (Bloom, 1999; Psencik, 2011).

However, one drawback that has arisen to coaches with substantial years of experience is the desire to share their experiences with the new principal and tell them how to handle problems that arise. Whitmore (2009) noted that the ideal coach would be one with a wealth of technical knowledge. It is, however,

very hard for experts to withhold their expertise sufficiently to coach well.

Psnecek (2011) also noted this issue with coaches:

A desire to help others solve their problems can get in the way of coaching; it seems faster just to tell personal stories or relate experiences and solve the problem. Although these offers are often appreciated, they are not useful coaching strategies as they are grounded in assumptions that someone other than the individual can solve one's own problems and that one person's experiences are applicable to another's. (p. 70)

Too often, especially in mentoring programs, mentees and coachees want to know what to do and mentors and coaches fall prey to the demands. Allison-Napolitano (2013) described that too often it is more challenging to replace giving answers and advice with the skills of coaching. Coaches with proper training and great skill do not allow their desire to help impede the coaching process, thus ensuring that the new principal does not become reliant on the coach.

Secondly, coaches that succeed in producing effective new principals ask questions, challenge assumptions, and listen. One of the most powerful things leaders [coaches] can do is to ask challenging questions that inspire discovery, new insights, and new action (Reiss, 2012). From Psnecek (2007):

Questioning is an essential component of effective coaching, but thoughtful questions emerge naturally from careful listening. Through questioning and challenging a leader's assumptions, a quality coach guides the principal to see new possibilities for the principal personally and for those the principal leads. Skillful questioning is a central skill in coaching. Effective coaches question the principals they are coaching so that these leaders see things in ways they have never seen before, hear what they have never heard, and think in ways they have never thought. (p. 20)

Only through the careful process of questioning and listening can issues facing new principals be solved. Questioning and understanding by coaches can help alleviate some of the possible concerns and help new principals learn to balance their time and energy (Brown & Tobis, 2013). Through coaching, new principals learn to face their own issues and problems that come along with being a new principal.

Finally, coaches build sustaining relationships of trust with their coachees. By establishing clear goals and norms between the coach and principal, only then can the coaching relationship begin the building of trust (Bloom, Castagna, Moir, & Warren, 2006). Confidentiality and trust are of the utmost importance with coaching and leads to the success of the new principal (Rhodes, 2009). Without trust, the coach will fail to help the new principal reach their potential for success. Covey (2008) noted that for relationships to be trustworthy, they need to contain certain trust behaviors such as talking straight, demonstrating respect, creating transparency, showing loyalty and listening first. Without such trust behaviors, coaching will fail to impact the effectiveness of a new principal. Reiss (2012) stated that success in challenging assumptions will depend on the quality of the relationship between people involved. The relationship needs to be based on openness, honesty, and trust.

Examples of Coaching Programs

Documentation of coaching programs is less prevalent than current mentoring models. As Reiss (2007) stated:

Coaching as a strategy to reform schools is in its infancy. We have yet to fully appreciate its potential for strengthening schools and boosting the performance of school leaders responsible for high levels of achievement in others in a demanding, complex environment. (p. 4)

An early documented coaching program was in 1998 by the University of Santa Cruz's New Teacher Center. The New Administrators Program was created with the support of the Noyce Foundation, whose goal is to support initiatives designed to produce significant improvement in teaching and learning (Noyce Foundation, 2008). New administrators from the Central California region were asked to participate in the program. The New Administrators Program was based on the following premises: school improvement depends upon effective school leadership; contemporary school leadership requires a high degree of skill, sophistication, and intuitive ability; the fact that there is a pressing need for effective new school administrators; and administrators need intensive support in their early years of service (Bloom, 1999).

The program was designed to provide new administrators with the opportunity to be observed and coached through authentic situations, conducting teacher observations and post-observation conferences, facilitation of staff meetings, working with parents, and managing budgets, to name a few (Bloom, 1999). The coaches recruited for the program were employees of the New Teacher Center involved with the implementation of the program or retired administrators. At the start of the school year, new principals and their coaches reviewed the expectations for the program and created goals for the year.

Throughout the year, coaches and new principals would meet every two weeks at the new administrator's school for coaching conversations pertaining to the individual needs of the new principal and would stay in contact through phone calls and email. The coaches helped new administrators access research to support school improvement efforts; identify trainers, consultants, and model schools; and find specific tools such as budget management software (Bloom, 1999).

The most important factor was the coach's ability to be available as independent and confidential sounding boards for new administrators as they struggled with a variety of difficult issues in their first year of service (Bloom, 1999). The 1998–1999 pilot year concluded with the resounding fact that new administrators need one-to-one intensive coaching and support. Participants confirmed the value and need for the program. The new principals noted the isolation of the principalship, the value of coaching, and the value of having a third-party coach from outside of their own school system (Bloom, 1999). Several items of value were learned from the pilot year of the program. First, new principals are not fully prepared to assume their duties without significant support. The program showed that participants struggled with the very basic issues of budget management, time management, and staff supervision (Bloom, 1999). Secondly, effective coaching/mentoring relationships are highly individual. During the pilot year, some participants needed support with basic survival skills, while others were ready to move their schools forward with clear

improvement plans (Bloom, 1999). Others noted items that were of concern included the fact that becoming an effective site principal is a developmental process. New administrators did not necessarily know how to take best advantage of the program, the value of “job-alike” time with fellow new principals, and the need for support with technology (Bloom, 1999).

Since the implementation of the New Administrators Program in 1998, the program has expanded with the assistance of the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA). The research, work, and data that went into and was discovered in the New Administrators Program set the groundwork for a new program that takes what was done and expands on the goals of creating effective new principals through coaching. Coaching Leaders to Attain Student Success (CLASS) was implemented in the 2004–2005 school year based on the following precepts: the coach is a “different observer” of the coachee and his/her context, meaning that the coach brings a different perspective to the relationship and can see circumstances and possibilities the coachee may not see; the coaching relationship is based upon trust and permission; the coach moves between instructional and facilitative coaching strategies based upon assessment of the coachee’s needs and in pursuit of agreed-upon goals; the coach’s fundamental commitment to student success; and that professional standards are a framework for goal-setting and ongoing formative assessment (Bloom et al., 2004). The program rests on the commitment and expertise that recently retired administrators bring to novice principals (Bloom, Danilovich, & Fogel, 2005).

In the first year of CLASS, hundreds of retired principals and New Teacher Center employees were trained as leadership coaches. An established ongoing coaches' network was also created and assistance was given in the development of principal induction programs in districts throughout the state of California (Bloom et al., 2004). What makes CLASS different from the New Administrators Program is the training that coaches receive. Once passing through the selection process, coaches receive extensive training from the New Teacher Center (Bloom et al., 2005). Training is conducted on several different coaching strategies that the coach will be able to blend together to create an individualized program for the coachee. Effective coaches are trained in the ability to move between instructional coaching strategies, in which the coach serves as an expert consultant, collaborator, and teacher; and facilitative strategies, in which the coach adopts a mediational stance with a primary focus upon building the coachee's capacity through metacognition and reflection (Bloom et al., 2004).

Coaches are trained in cognitive and transformational coaching techniques that they are able to use while working with coachees. In cognitive coaching, the coach works with the new principal in recognizing his/her own thinking process, especially in the area of problem-solving skills (Funderstanding, 2001). Transformational coaching focuses on thinking differently rather than acting differently (Allison-Napolitano, 2013; Dickson, 2005). It is more emotion-based and relies on encouragement and appreciation towards and for the new principal. The blending of different coaching strategies assists a coach in being

able to decide when it is appropriate to take an instructional approach (e.g., when a new principal asks for help interpreting test scores) or a facilitative approach (e.g., the new principal determines how to work with faculty in improving those scores; Bloom et al., 2004). As a result of training, a coach in the CLASS program is able to move about the two approaches with ease and with the ability to determine when each approach is appropriate. During the course of the school year, coaches attend workshops that continue and follow up on their initial training with an emphasis on practicing their coaching skills and compiling their own portfolio documenting their coaching success (Bloom et al., 2005). With the completion of one year of successful coaching, coaches are able to apply to become fully certified leadership coaches. The condition of continuing the certification is the coach's continuing participation in a community of practice of school leadership coaches (Bloom et al., 2005).

The core of CLASS is focused on intensive, one-on-one coaching provided to new principals by the certified coaches and its ties to professional standards. New principals involved with CLASS are required to participate in individualized coaching for three to six hours each month with their coach (Bloom et al., 2005). Through observation of the coachee and participation of the coach in the coachee's school, the relationship built between the novice principal and coach becomes one of trust where issues pertaining to the new administrator such as weaknesses and concerns can be discussed in safety. Both parties participate in job-alike and seminar sessions designed around the needs of new

administrators (Bloom et al., 2005). Other aspects of the program include the agreement between the coach and the new principal to take full advantage of materials and other resources made available by the program and to participate in the evaluation of the elements of the program, its design, and personnel; completion of coaching activities organized around a Web-based formative assessment system; charting growth with an Individualized Development Plan; and collecting evidence of success in a School Data Portfolio (Bloom et al., 2005).

What was found during the CLASS program was impressive. Principals that participated showed dramatic academic improvement in their schools, averaging 20 to 22 points in growth (as measured by the Academic Performance Index) during a two year period of coaching (Bossi, 2008). With regards to retention, only four administrators out of the 50 that started the program left (Bossi, 2008). This led to a 96% retention rate for administrators who participated in the program.

Since the creation of the CLASS program, several other school districts have followed the lead of CLASS in creating coaching programs for new principals. The Duncan Principal Coaching Initiative (DPCI) in Texas and the Metropolitan ISD Principal Coaching Initiative (MPCI) are programs created with the intent of creating successful principals through the use of coaches. The studies followed new principals during their first year of the principalship and their interactions with their coaches (Lee, 2010; Libby, 2010). Through both

programs, principals are guided through the myriad of issues that they face in today's schools with the assistance of coaches. Issues that face the principals and their coaches range from improving student achievement to becoming effective leaders (both instructional and organizational). Evidence from each program showed positive influence on teacher practices and creating high standards of learning for students (Lee, 2010; Libby, 2010). At the conclusion of the programs, principals felt more confident in identifying areas of focus that continue to need developing and better understand their weaknesses and strengths (Lee, 2010; Libby, 2010).

The CLASS, DCPI, and MCPI programs put into realization a definition of what coaching should be. Coaching is not training; new principals are to determine what the focus of their coaching sessions should be. Coaching is not therapy; the focus needs to be about the accomplishment of goals. This does not mean that a coach will not have to deal with the personal issues that a new principal may be experiencing. Coaches must be prepared to address all sorts of concerns, and to recognize when a coachee's needs fall outside of the scope of leadership coaching, even when referral for therapeutic support may be appropriate (Bloom et al., 2004).

Components of Good Mentoring and Coaching Programs

Good mentoring and coaching programs facilitate new principals to be able to handle situations that will come upon them with the support, assistance, and guidance of a mentor. Whitmore (2009) stated that good coaching, and

good mentoring for that matter, can and should take a performer beyond the limitations of the coach or mentor's own knowledge.

In effective mentoring and coaching programs, common themes emerge that prepare new principals for the challenges that they will face in that first year, along with expectations that mentors need to have when preparing a new principal (Bloom, 1999; Brown, 2005).

When looking at the data regarding what components create a successful mentoring or coaching program, different programs offer different advice. Information gathered by Charlene Crocker and Sandra Harris, authors of *Facilitating Growth of Administrative Practitioners as Mentors*, concluded that mentoring programs should provide mentors with extra time with their mentees, even perhaps releasing the mentor from other duties (Crocker & Harris, 2002). Mentors need to be participating in formal training that emphasizes relationship building and professional collaborative behaviors. Mentors also need to be given guidelines that outline meaningful activities and ways to involve the mentees (Crocker & Harris, 2002).

Laura Dukess, writer of *Meeting the Leadership Challenge: Designing Effective Principal Mentoring Programs*, studied six new principals in New York City community school districts in 2001 and came to several of the same conclusions (Dukess, 2001). Dukess concluded that successful mentoring programs have the following characteristics: careful matching of mentors and mentees; clear expectations and guidelines for participants; a trusting

relationship between the mentor and mentee built on confidentiality; a nonsupervisory process, with mentors not required to judge job performance or to report performance to the mentee's superior; and a participatory relationship, in which mentors actually participate in some of the mentee's work (Dukess, 2001).

Pete Hall, author of *Building Bridges: Strengthening the Principal Induction Process through Intentional Mentoring*, explains pitfalls that must be overcome as programs are being planned. In order to create an effective mentoring program, all participants must agree upon the definitions and characteristics, and the common language of the program (Hall, 2008). Mentors need to have clear roles and responsibilities and time to work with the new principal. First-year principals need to be matched with mentors who will push them beyond what they think they are capable of doing (Hall, 2008). Recent research explains a variety of reasons for the breakdown between mentors and protégés including reluctance to assign responsibilities, jealousy, trust and confidentiality issues, and mentor pushiness (Hall, 2008). This is all the more reason to pay attention to the details and the happenings of the program.

In order for a mentoring or coaching program to survive and to have purpose for new principals, there are many components that need to be considered when creating the program. Since effective mentoring/coaching is a complex professional practice, the programs that develop and support mentors and their protégés could not be anything other than complex as well (Sweeny,

2003). Any program designed for new administrators must be highly respectful of the demands for time, energy, and attention that are already being placed upon these individuals (Bloom, 1999; Villani, 2006). Studies have shown that the more work that is required of new principals and the mentor/coach during the mentoring/coaching process the more the experience will be hindered. Creating requirements of completing reflection logs and professional growth plans have shown to be a hindrance—more paperwork to be completed (Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006). Requiring mentors/coaches and protégés to meet a set number of times during the new principal's first year, attendance of both mentor and protégé at training sessions, and completion of audio journals instead of written journals help build the mentor-protégé relationship and serves as a growth tool for both mentor and protégé (Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006).

In comparing successful mentoring and coaching programs, similar thoughts emerge as to why these programs are successful. Good programs have clearly-set goals and expectations for the new principals and mentors/coaches. From defining key terms to outlining specific goals, each individual element of a formal mentorship is essential to the success of the program (Hall, 2008). These programs address new principals' development needs and provide assistance for becoming integrated into the profession (Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006). The essential key to a successful program, however, is the relationship between mentor/coach and protégé. When conducting training associated with aspects of the principalship, both

mentor/coach and protégé need to be actively involved. A requirement for a specific number of face-to-face meetings between the new principal and mentor/coach should be established with the emphasis on relationship-building and professional reflection. This will help build the confidentiality and participatory relationship needed between both parties (Bugbee, 2006; Olson, 2007; Psenick, 2011). Successful mentor/coach-protégé pairings are typically based on geographic location, similar experience, gender, and thinking style. Mentors/coaches with similar ideas and thoughts as their protégés have more success in assisting the first-year principal with situations that arise, and in general.

The role of a good mentor/coach in a successful mentoring or coaching program is also vital to the growth and survival of a new principal. Mentors and coaches combine experience with the ability to listen and introduce and socialize protégés into informal administrative networks. Two studies done by the Educational Research Service noted the need for beginning principals to have collegial support (Holloway, 2004). To become a successful mentor, veteran principals need formal training on mentoring a new principal. Principal mentors, as well as educational coaches, should have relevant expertise as instructional leaders, strong interpersonal skills, and a ready supply of ideas to meet the challenges faced by mentees (Holloway, 2004; Olson, 2007; Psencik, 2011; Reiss, 2007). Mentors also need to be provided with high quality activities that assist them in the nurturing of a new principal.

Summary

As the literature suggests, the need for creating support systems through coaching and mentoring for principals has never been more in need than in today's society. With the ever-changing nature of education, new principals need constant guidance and assistance to navigate the sometimes difficult and unknown waters of the principalship. Current mentoring and coaching programs have shown that with careful planning, training and goals for participants, new principals are able to define their success through improvement and achievement in their schools.

Chapter III continues into the design of this study of the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model. The chapter begins with the study's design, background information of the coaching model and the study's participants. How the data was collected and analyzed will be discussed at the end of the chapter.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN

I wanted to investigate the experiences of the principals who had participated in the Guilford County Schools (GCS) Coaching Model during the first five years. Knowing that my experience as a new principal in GCS was often difficult due to the lack of a strong mentor or coach, examination into the experiences of how new principals experienced coaching would shed light on how new principals can be successful during their first year of the principalship with the assistance of a coach.

Research Questions

I examined the following questions:

1. From their own perspectives, what experiences did/do novice principals have during their involvement with the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model?
2. How did/do novice principals feel about their coaching experience, their self-perceived level of success during year one, and their readiness for future successful years?

Methodology

This study focused on participants in the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model for new principals, which started in 2007. Principals currently in

the program were only asked to participate in the survey; since they are still completing the program, the interview piece of the study would be impossible for them to answer since the nature of the questions pertain to those principals who have finished the coaching model.

At the time of the survey, 64 principals had participated in at least one of the seven years of the program. All 64 principals were requested to participate. The list of participants was provided by the Coaching Program Director. Twenty-eight principals agreed to participate in the survey. After agreeing to participate in the study, the participants were asked to complete a 29-question electronic survey regarding their experiences with the program, interactions with their coach, and their perception of the program's value to them and other novice principals (see Appendix A). After the survey, a 14-question one-on-one interview with eight novice principals (from the original list) who have participated in one or more of the first five years (2007 – 2011) of the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model was conducted.

The individuals who were interviewed were randomly selected from the list provided by the Coaching Program Director. Names of the principals who agreed to participate in the survey were the only names allowed in the random selection. The names were placed into an opaque container and drawn. The principals whose names were drawn were contacted through e-mail to participate in the interview. In the case if a principal(s) decided not to participate in the interview, names would continue to be drawn until all eight interview positions

were filled. The interview questions were more in-depth in regards to discussing their experiences (see Appendix B). It was hoped that the data collected from these participants would give a personal perspective of their experience with the program.

A third data collection method was a 14-question interview with the program's three Coaching Directors (see Appendix C). Since the program has changed directors three times since it was created, the viewpoint of the program director was to give insight into how, and if, the program had changed over the years since it started. Finally, I was planning to conduct a review of documents that pertained to the program. However, after discussion with the directors of the program, there were no documents to review.

In selecting a research method, I chose a qualitative case study, using a select number of participants for research. This type of research involves interviewing and surveying the participants regarding their experiences with the coaching model and how it benefited them as novice principals. By studying the experiences of the new principals and their perceived levels of success, a case can be built to support or oppose coaching for new principals in Guilford County. The case can further support or oppose the idea that new principals in any school district need coaching to support them through the first years of the principalship. While the concept of coaching for principals is still a relatively new idea, the data on the subject is deficient due to incomplete data or the fact that there are few coaching programs available in the country. The idea behind a

case-based research study is to explain a particular issue or problem using a specific group of individuals by utilizing multiple sources of information, such as surveys and interviews (Creswell, 2007). Robert Stake (1995) notes that crucial to case study research is that the object of study is a case: “As a form of research, case study is defined by interest in individual cases, not by the methods of inquiry used”. Case studies are classified upon the size of the case, ranging from individuals to multiple subjects or programs (Creswell, 2007). In studying the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model, choosing a collective case study was best approach to understanding how the principals experienced the coaching model and their perceived level of success. In a collective case study, multiple cases are collected to investigate one issue or problem (Yin, 2003).

By interviewing multiple principals throughout the time of the coaching program, a case can be put together to determine the success or failure of the program in preparing new principals for the principalship to show different perspectives of the program. Using this type of qualitative study examined how novice principals experienced coaching using their personal experiences to generate the case to support coaching in school districts.

Key Concepts and Variables

The study of novice principals and their participation in the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model centered around two main questions: “What experience did the selected participants have with the coaching model?” and “How did the

coaching experience affect their perceived level of success during their first year in the principalship?" I did not have prior knowledge of the participants before selection. Deciding by random selection allowed the researcher to discover if all the participants, regardless of their background, experienced coaching in the same way. Previous administrative experience of the novice principal could have consisted of an assistant principalship but no other administrative work, whether school or central office. This information was gathered after the participant had been selected and had agreed to participate in the study. The location of the novice principal, in terms of what school they served, was not a factor in this study. Through interviews with the participants, the description of their work assignment might have been revealed. However, the study focused on how coaching would assist the novice principal in their assignment. For example, if one of the participants was assigned to a high-needs school, the study examined how the novice principal and the coach worked collaboratively to identify and find solutions to school issues. The focus was on the interaction between the novice principal and coach, not the school. The interviews of the three Coaching Directors were only used to gain insight into the program design during their time as director. The information gathered was only used as a tool to understand the purpose and goal of the program.

Research Setting

The setting for this study played a central role in understanding the impact of coaching for new principals. Since Guilford County Schools was the setting for

this particular study, it was crucial to understand how and why the program came into existence. Also vital to the study was learning about the program's design, such as goals and objectives, coaching parameters such as meetings between the coach and new principal, and evaluation of the program.

Guilford County Schools is located in the central region of North Carolina. GCS serves the large cities of Greensboro and High Point, along with the surrounding area that encompasses the county. Until 1993, the county was split into two school systems: Greensboro City Schools and Guilford County Schools. The voters of Guilford County decided to combine both school districts into one unified school system which is the third largest school district in North Carolina. Today, the school district serves approximately 72,000 students in 126 schools and is one of Guilford County's largest employers with over 10,000 employees.

As a school district, Guilford County realized the need to create a better program focused on creating effective new principals using coaching techniques. The previous mentoring program, the Horizons Project, which involved a multi-day leadership development and mentoring program that was spread over the course of a year, focused on principals within their first three years as a principal (A. Clayton, personal communication, March 8, 2013). However, after interviews were conducted with principals from the Horizons Project, many noted that the leadership development piece of the mentoring program was favorable, but what they really wanted was help with their schools (A. Clayton, personal communication, March 8, 2013).

The Guilford County Schools Coaching Model initiative was focused on meeting the needs of new principals by creating a two-year coaching program within the district using basic principles of coaching, such as hiring coaches from outside the district and creating a non-evaluative, confidential relationship between the coach and new principal. Coaches were initially assigned to the new principals for the first two years of their principalship when the program began but currently only provides coaches for new principals for the first year.

Trust and confidentiality are the foundation for successful coaching for new principals and is the cornerstone for the success of the GCS Coaching Model according to the past and current directors of the coaching program. As Kathy Vaughn, the first director of the model, stated when discussing the purpose of the GCS coaching program, “[the purpose] is to grow the person professionally and in many cases personally as well to help them develop those skills that they need as a leader in a confidential, non-evaluative environment” (K. Vaughn, personal communication, March 5, 2013).

The Coaching Model applied other successful techniques that can be found in successful mentoring/coaching programs throughout the country, such as the strategic recruitment of mentors and strategic pairing of mentors (Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006; Brown, 2005; Hall, 2008; Holloway, 2004). According to Alex Clayton, former director of the GCS Coaching Model, coaches for the coaching model are chosen through several factors. One factor is their experience as a principal. All of the coaches had been former principals of at

least one of the three levels (elementary, middle, and high) and had experienced success on their job (A. Clayton, personal communication, March 8, 2013).

Secondly, coaches had to have successful experience working with new principals, whether as mentor or as a coach. Thirdly, the coaches were available most of the time to assist the new principals they would be coaching. Availability was not limited to face-to-face meetings, but also included email correspondence and phone calls. Coaches were assigned to new principals based on the needs of the principals and the strengths of the coaches. Coaches who were successful in turning around low-performing schools would be assigned principal(s) in low-performing schools (A. Clayton, personal communication, March 8, 2013).

Alsbury and Hackmann (2006) and Gallagos (1999) also not only discussed scheduled meetings between a new principal and coach but monthly meetings where all coaches and new principals from the district could collaborate. According to Catherine Miller, current director of the coaching model, coaches and new principals in Guilford County are required to meet face-to-face once a month, but the time can vary due to the needs of the principal (personal communication, March 11, 2013). Coaches may stay the entire day with their assigned principal or spend half day with them and return two weeks later. The scheduling is decided between the principal and coach to maximize the efficiency of the coaching. In addition to the coach-principal meetings, which are held at the school of the principal, both parties are required to attend monthly

meetings held by the school system (K. Vaughn, personal communication, March 5, 2013). Directors facilitate the meetings with the coaches and various topics are presented such as budgeting and teacher evaluation (K. Vaughn, personal communication, March 5, 2013). It is also an opportunity for the new principals to collaborate and create their own network of support.

As for the evaluation of the program, as Clayton stated:

There were no formal evaluations but there was continuous feedback from participants. In discussions with Kathy Vaughn, she'd refer to the coaching project as perhaps the most successful activity that the district had participated in for beginning principals. (personal communication, March 8, 2013)

The only formal evaluation, as well as funding, of the program came from the Bryan Foundation in Greensboro as part of its help in funding the coaching model. The individual evaluation results were kept confidential; however the overall results were shared with the district. The overall results of the formal evaluation and feedback from the coaches and the principals have shown that the program has been effective in helping GCS's new principals succeed in their first year of the principalship (C. Miller, personal communication, March 11, 2013; A. Clayton, personal communication, March 8, 2013; K. Vaughn, personal communication, March 5, 2013).

Research Participants

All novice principals in Guilford County who have participated in the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model were asked to participate in the survey

part of this study. Of the 64 original principals on the list provided by the Coaching Director, 28 participated in the study by completing the survey. Eight principals were then chosen from the original 28 to complete the interviews. There was some prior knowledge of these principals before selection due to the fact that I had previously worked for Guilford County Schools and interacted with some of them as a principal. However, at the time the study began, I had no information pertaining to what type of school (elementary, middle, high) they currently worked in, or the attributes of the school. I had no knowledge as to the education background and experience of the participants prior to participant agreement. In addition to the novice principals, the three Coaching Directors were interviewed to gain an understanding of the program's design during their time as the Coaching Director.

From the 28 participants, eight principals were chosen at random to participate in the interview process. Table 1 below displays the eight principals who participated in the interview and their administrative experience.

Table 1

New Principal Information

Principal's Name*	AP Experience	Time with Coach
Linda Shelton	2 years	2 years
Rob Johnson	1 year	2 years
Denise Wright	1 year	1 year
Lawrence Weaver	2 years	2 years

Table 1

(Cont.)

Gary Walden	4 years	2 years
Mary Gibson	2 years	2 years
Melissa Simpson	3.5 years	1 years
Sherry Duncan	2 years	2 years

All names have been changed and represent pseudonyms

Interview Participants

Linda Shelton has been a part of the education field for the past 16 years. She started her education career as a middle school teacher. From there, she received her administration degree and became an elementary assistant principal for two years. She currently serves as an elementary principal in Guilford County.

Rob Johnson started his 14-year career in education as an elementary teacher. After completing his administration degree, he became a principal intern and then an assistant principal. He currently serves as an elementary principal in Guilford County.

Denise Wright began her 21-year education career as an elementary teacher. Once obtaining her administration degree, she became a middle school assistant principal. She currently serves Guilford County Schools as an elementary school principal.

Lawrence Weaver embarked on his 14-year education career as a high school teacher. He went on to serve as a curriculum facilitator and assistant

principal for the district. He then served as a high school principal for Guilford County.

Gary Walden began his education career 13 years ago. He started his education career as a middle and elementary school teacher. Once receiving his administration degree, he became a middle school assistant principal. He currently is an elementary school principal in Guilford County.

Mary Gibson began her 22-year education career as middle and elementary school teacher. She served as a school support officer before becoming a middle school assistant principal. She currently serves the district as a middle school principal.

Melissa Simpson started her education career as a middle school teacher. For 13 years, she has served Guilford County Schools as a teacher, a high school assistant principal and now, a middle school principal.

Sherry Duncan began her 15-year education career as an elementary teacher. She moved on to become a curriculum facilitator and high school assistant principal. She serves the county as an elementary principal currently.

In addition to the principals' interviews and survey, the three coaching model directors were interviewed to provide background information about the coaching model's focus and design. The table below displays the three coaching model directors and their time as director. The coaches of the program were not asked to participate due the study focusing on the new principals, their experiences during coaching, and their perceived level of success.

Table 2

Coaching Model Director Information

Director Name*	Time as Director
Kathy Vaughn	First 4 years of program
Dr. Alex Clayton	First 2 years of program/consultant
Dr. Catherine Miller	Present director

All names have been changed and represent pseudonyms

Data Collection

To conduct data collection for this study, participants completed an initial survey. From the original survey participants, eight novice principals were then selected to participate in a one-on-one interview. The survey was conducted using UNCG's Qualtrics program, an online survey tool. Questions for the survey are listed in Appendix A.

As previously stated, following the analysis of the survey questions, there was an interview of eight principals from the first four years of the model to give a personal perspective of their experience with the program. The principals were randomly selected from a pool of participants.

During the hour and a half-long individual interviews, each participating principal was asked 14 questions pertaining to their coaching experience. The questions revolved around what the coaching experience was like, how it assisted the novice principal during their first year/s on the job, and what perceived level of success they felt due to being part of the coaching model.

The interviews of the Coaching Directors revolved around the design of the program. Questions pertained to how coaches were chosen and matched, how the program was designed during their time, and what changes they made to the program as the Coaching Director. The individual interviews took place in a location in agreement with their comfort level, which ended up being the school or office at which the principal or director currently worked. All participants were notified prior to the beginning of the interview as to how the data would be collected. For this study, tape recording of individual interviews was sufficient. Once the interviews were transcribed, the interviews were sent back to the participants to verify information for member checking and ensure that the data was correct. The participants could add additional information at that time as well.

Data Analysis

The factors of the study focused on the experiences of the novice principals. Due to the interviews being recorded, each interview was transcribed for the purpose of information organization and was coded with the survey data to create categories for the data. The data gathered from the survey and interviews were categorized into common experiences amongst the participating novice principals. The purpose of the survey was to gauge the overall opinion of the program, the principals' experience with their coach and what (if any) skills were learned/developed during their time in the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model. Through the interviews, I found connections with the

responses from the survey. Such categories reflected the relationship between the coach and the novice principal. The study researched common trends that all novice principals experience during the coaching process. Similarity in strategies used by the coaches and level of trustworthiness between the principal and coach were examples of possible categories of information that might be revealed during interviews. The data gathered from the Coaching Directors were to give background information into the program design during the year(s) the novice principals were in the program.

All interviews were transcribed and read several times to gain maximum understanding of the data. As it has been previously stated, the point of the study was to understand the experiences that these novice principals encountered with the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model. Examination into the experiences of how new principals experienced coaching would shed light on how future new principals can be successful during their first year of the principalship with the assistance of a coach.

For each interview, significant statements that pertained to the experience the new principals had through their participation in the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model were identified. Meaning was derived from each of the statements to assist with creating categories. From there, the significant statements were clustered into categories, which allowed for common categories or themes to emerge across the data. Once the categories emerged, data from the survey was added to the data gained from the interviews.

From the eight principal interview transcripts and three director interview transcripts, 178 significant statements were isolated. Significant statements were phrases or sentences that were pertinent to the study during the interview process. For each interview question, one to two significant statements were identified. To better understand the significance of each statement, formulated meanings were created. Formulated meanings were my thoughts and interpretation of the data. The meanings were used to help cluster the statements when it was time to put the statements into categories.

Researcher Subjectivity

As I had previously been an inexperienced principal three times, once as an elementary principal, as a middle school principal, and as a high school principal, the concept of having a coach to assist with the transitions of being a principal might have been useful. There was not a program in place to assist me with the obstacles that I would face in each of my situations. I would not be able to say if a coach would have been beneficial or not in this case, but it is a possibility. Since the study is using first-hand accounts of the coaching process, I based the research on that provided information. The data focused on the parallel experiences of the inexperienced principals. The purpose of the study was to discover if there were common connections between coaching experiences, no matter the setting, and experience in which the novice principal and coach found themselves.

Trustworthiness

This study of novice principals and how they experience the coaching process was generated using first-hand accounts of participants experiencing coaching through the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model. The interviews conducted with all participants were personal experiences, and they expressed their view of what the coaching program meant to them. The study utilized the first-hand account experiences to determine the impact of coaching on novice principals in Guilford County.

Since all of the interview participants are still employees of Guilford County Schools, every possible measure was taken to ensure the confidentiality of the participants. Initial email to participants asking to participate in the study detailed the parameters of participation such as the precise purpose of the study, time requirements of participants and confidentiality protection if the new principals chose to participate. Details from UNCG's and Guilford County Schools' Institutional Review Boards were shared with principals deciding to participate. All participants signed participation consent agreements outlining the purpose of the study, what the information would be used for, and the risks and benefits to the participant. For the survey, no names or school locations were asked of the principals. As for the interviews, detailed information such as the specific school names were not asked of the principals. Interviewed participants were anonymous and were noted as such in the research with pseudonyms. The only information revealed was education background and experience. No other

information was required to be revealed for this study. All audio recordings and transcripts of the interviews were kept confidential under lock and key.

Transcriptions were reviewed a minimum of three times for accuracy. If there was still doubt about a comment made, I contacted the participant for clarification. To ensure accuracy of the program's conception, design and continuation was verified by the coaching model directors.

Benefits and Risks of the Study

The possible benefits of study participation to the novice principals were great. Participation allowed the novice principals to reflect on their first year as a principal and whether participating in the coaching process was beneficial or not. In the years to follow, the novice principals were able to reflect on what occurred in the first year and improve upon weaknesses with the assistance of the coach. Participants were part of information sharing needed to address problems with the current coaching model. The first-hand accounts pointed out weaknesses in the program and how changes may be implemented. Future principals who will participate in the coaching program will benefit from changes incorporated due to the information provided by participants. Information presented during the interviews will be used to assist future principals, coaches, and the model director to determine the worth of the program and possible benefits of model participation.

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS

When I hear the word ‘coaching,’ I think of the relationship between an individual or team and a coach where the specific needs of either the team or individual are addressed.”

“A coach is a teacher, trainer, buddy.”

“A coach is somebody that you can rely on, somebody that you could go to and somebody that’s going to give you some honest feedback. Good or bad. It’s [the feedback] coming from somebody that has your best interest and is wanting you to become better.”

“I think of a coach as a mentor, someone who will look at my practice, look at what I’m doing and guide me, who will give corrective feedback, if there’s something that I am clearly making wrong decisions about, as in, like if you’re playing a sport, if you’re not practicing certain things the right way, you would give me guidance and feedback.”

Again, I examined the following questions to determine how the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model impacted new principals within the district.

1. From their own perspectives, what experiences did/do novice principals have during their involvement with the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model?

2. How did/do novice principals feel about their coaching experience, their self-perceived level of success during year one and their readiness for future successful years?

After utilizing UNCG's Qualtrics Program to survey the new principals who participated in Guilford County Schools Coaching Model and interviewing new principals and the coaching model directors, I found the overall experience of the novice principals with the program to have been positive. The data gathered indicates that several aspects of the program have been quite beneficial for new principals, especially in regards to the coaches themselves.

Data Analysis Presentation

Chapter III discussed how I analyzed each interview along with the survey results to create the following data presentation. With each interview question, I created a list of significant statements that pertained to the experience the new principals had through their participation in the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model. These statements focused on important aspects and pertinent information provided in each question of the interview. To make sense of the information that was gathered from the statements, meaning of the statements were simplified to assist with creating the categories that would organize the data, as seen in Table 3. Appendix D includes the entire table of significant statements and their meanings for each principal interview question. From there, the significant statements were clustered into categories, which allowed for common ideas to emerge across the data. Once the categories emerged, data

from the survey was added to the data gained from the interviews. Table 4 contains an example of a category that emerged from the data. Appendix E contains the category information for all four themes.

Table 3

Examples of Significant Statements and Their Meanings

Examples of Significant Statements	Meanings
<p>It is interesting when we talk through what I'm struggling with him [the coach] and being able to give feedback that really does relate because he's been there before.</p> <p>He [the coach] would come and walk the halls with me. He would walk in classrooms and do observations, just walk through observations with me, he would bring articles about things that were new and cutting edge as far as the principalship and leadership.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to have a coach you can trust because they can relate to you. • The coach is investing time and energy into the new principal by assisting in what the new principal needs.
<p>It might have been a good idea, actually, to have worked with him over the summer, just because there wasn't a lot of guidance over the summer.</p> <p>I wish we had more time with our coach. I wish I'd had a coach my second year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations for the future. Possible change to the program. The needs of the new principal started before students and staff entered the building. • Need for new principals and coaches to meet more often and for longer periods of time. Possible program recommendation.

Table 4

Example Category with Statement Meanings

Interaction with Coach
<p>Meeting on a regular basis (time was different for each principal, however)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being able to work through upcoming events • Talk through problems & able to offer suggestions/multiple perspectives • Give feedback • Completed school visits with walkthroughs • Assistance in instructional support, how to handle struggling teachers, observations • Participated in new principal meetings (show support) • Bringing articles on latest trends and ideas of the principalship and leadership • Provided a therapist-type support • Was easy to get in contact with • Always encouraging • Honest • Comfortable to talk to without fear

From the survey data and the interviews, four categories emerged. The full survey results can be found in Appendix F. Some categories were broken

down into sub-categories. Table 5 contains the categories and the sub-categories that emerged from the data.

Table 5

Categories and Sub-categories that Emerged from the Data

Category	Sub-Category
Category 1: Perception of new principal coaching expectations and needs prior to coaching	Sub-Category 1: Coaching Expectations
	Sub-Category 2: New principal needs prior to coaching
Category 2: Assessment of the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model	Sub-Category 1: GCS Coaching Model Design
	Sub-Category 2: Training Provided by the GCS Coaching Model
	Sub-Category 3: Collaboration time with coaches and other new principals
Category 3: Interaction with the coach	
Category 4: New principals' reflections of the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model	Sub-Category 1: The new principal's viewpoint of the coaching impact on the school
	Sub-Category 2: The new principal's viewpoint of the coaching impact on them as an educational leader

Category 1: Perception of New Principal Coaching Expectations and Needs Prior to Coaching

For this category, the data are broken into two sub-categories: coaching expectations and new principal needs prior to coaching.

Coaching expectations. To understand the perspective of the new principals prior to entering the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model, the principals were asked about their expectations of their coaches and their struggles as new principals before official coaching occurred. When questioned about the expectations of what a coach should be, many participants responded with “a mentor,” “someone who has your best interest in mind,” and “someone who can provide honest feedback and advice.” Multiple sources of literature such as Archer (2006), Bloom (1999) and Whitmore (2009) agree with the statements provided by the principals. The need for a mentor or a coach to be supportive, transparent and trustworthy is critical to the success of the principal during their first year of the principalship. New principals need someone that has been in their situation to help navigate the unknown, and sometimes wary waters of being a principal. In her interview, Denise Wright summed up the idea of coaching as:

A mentor-type role, someone who’s going to guide me through, point me out, someone I can be honest with, someone that I can share my thoughts with and also someone who’s going to be there to help me when I need them to help me with whatever the situation can be.

All eight principals had similar ideas/expectations of what coaching should be. Collectively, they expressed coaching as a mentor-like program. However, the principals did not distinguish the difference between mentoring and coaching when asked about what they thought “coaching” was and continued to use the word “mentor.” I did not feel the sense that the principals understood the

difference between coaching and mentoring. They saw the coaching program as a mentoring program when asked about what coaching meant to them. In schools, mentoring is the norm for introducing new teachers and principals to the job they will be taking on for the year. It is synonymous with how we have prepared new teachers and principals. Mentoring is not that different from coaching, but is not the aim of the program. As Bossi (2008) and Reiss (2012) described the difference between mentoring and coaching as a partnership in where problems are solved through collaboration, goals are established and the development of the principal is vital to success. Mentors do all of the aforementioned strategies. However, it is how a coach proceeds with those strategies that separate them from mentors and it is vital to the continued success of the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model that participants understand the differences between coaching and mentoring.

New principal needs prior to coaching. With the aim of the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model to produce successful new principals through coaching, many of the participants before the formal coaching started had similar challenges that they faced. According to six of the eight participants, they felt that their biggest challenge as a new principal was time management. With the ever increasing pressure from government and parental groups to ensure students are excelling, principals face a never-ending battle to make choices in the best interest of students every day (Baker, 2010; Bloom, 1999; Davis, Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, & Meyerson, 2005; Ellison & Hayes, 2006; Oksana,

Zepeda, & Bengtson, 2012). It is a time-consuming process all the while ensuring the building is running effectively. To put it into perspective from a new principal, Gary Walden stated:

A significant challenge has been learning how to balance my interaction, my time and the energy that I spend toward them to make sure that the time is productive and meaningful. The management of time and priorities, just constantly reprioritizing, putting on this hat, taking off that one, and putting on another one.

Rob Johnson had stated a similar experience:

I think the biggest challenge is we're dealing with everything that comes at you at one time and knowing how to prioritize what's important, what needs to be taken care of right now, what can be put on the back burner for a little bit.

Another challenge that arose after interviewing the new principals was their perceived preparedness for the principalship. After looking at each of the new principal's previous administration experience, all of the participants became principals with less than five years of assistant principal experience. Mary Gibson mentioned,

I had two years as an AP (assistant principal) and although they were two very good years, I didn't feel like I had as much structure as I would like to have had coming into my first principalship. I didn't feel I got some of the needed exposure that I wish I had as an AP.

Melissa Simpson noted:

When you're an assistant principal, you work so much with the managerial parts of it, now you have the managerial part and the instructional part and then you jump into the political part of it.

The data beg the question about moving assistant principals into principal positions before they are ready, even with the assistance of a coach. Numerous researchers discussed the importance of training and education before a person accepts the role of a new principal (Alsbury & Hackmann, 2006; Hall, 2008; Harris, 2006; Psnencik, 2011). To ensure that successful schools are being led by the most qualified people, there is a certain degree of responsibility by both the school district and new principal to be certain that that person is ready for the principalship.

Category 2: Assessment of the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model

In this category, participants were asked about their experiences with the program's set up. Questions in this category centered on how the participants interacted with aspects of the program's structure, such as meetings with coaches and other new principals, pairing of coaches with the new principals, and training materials. Bloom (1999) noted "Successful programs respect the demands of time of both the principal and the coach. The more work involved, the less effective the program" (p. 15). The category was broken into three sub-categories: GCS Coaching Model design, training provided to participants, and collaboration time with coaches and other new principals.

As with any program, the efficiency and management of a program is vital to the success of its participants. Without effective monitoring and ensuring the program is accomplishing set goals, programs will fail to improve the participants. According to the principals in their interviews and the survey data, the design and management of the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model and the training that was provided was an area they felt needed improvement. However, there are several aspects of the program's design, management and provided training the principals felt were beneficial to their success during their first year in the principalship.

GCS Coaching Model. According to the interviewed principals, the program design aspect that had the most influence on the new principals was the coach and the fact that the coach had no affiliations to Guilford County Schools. Establishment of trust is critical in coaching relationships and the principals could express any matter of issues or feelings with the coach due to the knowledge that the information shared would remain between the two parties. Psencik (2011) and Reiss (2007) stated the importance of the coach not being associated with the school district of the principal. Rob best summed up the feelings of all the principals when he stated:

I think one of the key things is that she [the coach] was available as someone who wasn't tied to the school system. I did feel like I could say anything to her and I could say something without fear of judgment or fear that it was going to get back to somebody and that my job would be in jeopardy.

Additionally, Alsbury and Hackmann (2006), Bloom et al. (2006), Gallagos (1999), Kee et al. (2010), Reiss (2012), and Rhodes (2009) all stated the importance of pairing the right coaches with the right new principal. Of the interviewed principals, all eight were pleased with their coach and felt the match was idyllic, as seen in Figure 1.

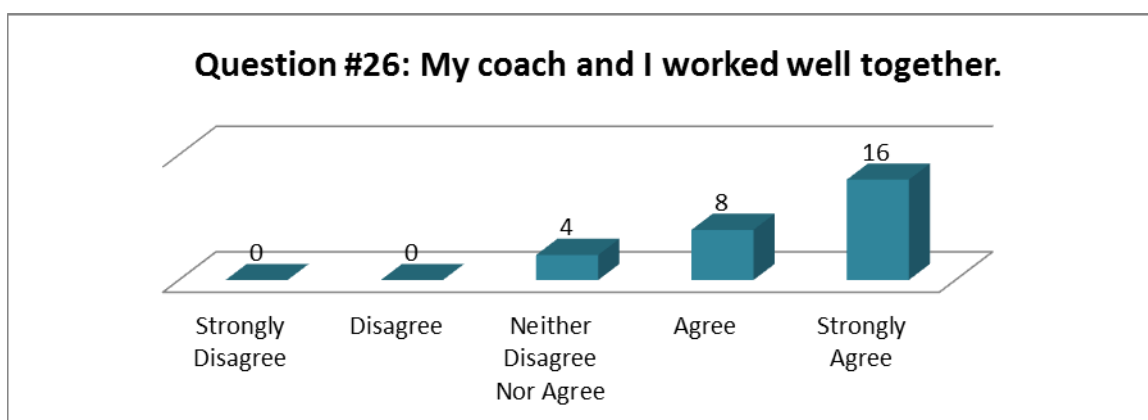


Figure 1. Ability of the Coach and New Principal to Work Together.

When asked about how the principals were matched with their coaches, Kathy Vaughn and Catherine Miller stated that the coaches were matched based on the strengths of the coach versus the needs of the principal and the needs of the school. Catherine Miller explained how the coaches and principals were matched up:

We basically just looked at the profiles, tried to match up the skill set and it's gone really well. I think it's better than before, no personality conflicts or anything like that.

Personality of the coach and principal were also considered in the formula for pairing the coach with the new principal. For the most part, the formula has worked, which will be explored further in Category 3: Interactions with the coach.

Another aspect of the design and management of the coaching model that agreed with the principals was the resources that were provided. From the interviewed principals, the level of experience of the coaches and the knowledge and resources they brought to the job of coaching ranked high among the principals as keys to success. Bloom (1999, 2004) in his many studies on mentoring and coaching for new principals has noted multiple times the importance of training of coaches, but also the level of experience they bring to coaching new principals. Psnecik (2011) also mentioned in *The Coach's Craft: Powerful Practices to Support School Leaders* the importance of documented success in multiple levels of school for coaches. Lawrence Weaver noted:

What I found to be most beneficial [during the program] was just the general support of knowing that somebody else has gone through that and this is what they have gone through.

Gary acknowledged the same feelings with regards to discussing the valuable resources provided by his coach:

She's [the coach] always got something in her back pocket. She always brings some handouts and they're relevant handouts so if I told her, "Hey look. My guided reading sucks. Across the board. I don't know what they're doing. I've done the research and visited a couple other schools that have it in place." She'll give me some good feedback and then by the next meeting she'll have an article for me or she'll shoot me an email with the article.

However, one issue that arose with the new principals and their coaches with regards to knowledge and experience was with the coach's own experience.

Allison-Napolitano (2013), Psnecik (2011), and Whitmore (2009) stated the issue with coaches is the desire to share their experiences with the new principal and tell them how to handle problems that arise. It was an issue with some of the principals because they felt that they were being told what and how to handle a situation rather than learning the best course of action to resolve the issue.

Sherry Duncan described a situation she had with her coach that emphasizes this issue:

It's hard to hear about personal experiences that a person has had when the experience really encompasses everything that person did to show that person is a leader, that person's relationship with their staff, the kids in their building, and the kind of challenges that that school had. It isn't going to match up [the coach's experiences] perfectly to mine and sometimes I feel like we could have spent more time on what are the particulars of your [the coach] situation that are factors that kind of steer it one way or the other and trying to learn more about my situation at hand instead of telling stories about prior experiences that he's had.

From the survey, Question 14 and 23 refer to this situation that Sherry describes.

Figure 2 shows the impact that a coach has on the decisions made in a new principal's school.

Typically, a coach should not have that much influence in the decisions of the principal, but should serve as guide to the decisions being made by the principal. In coaching, it is the coachee that should be steering the coaching relationship. What is even more interesting is the number of participants that felt

that the coach did not allow the principals to learn about situations that impacted their school, which is shown in Figure 3.

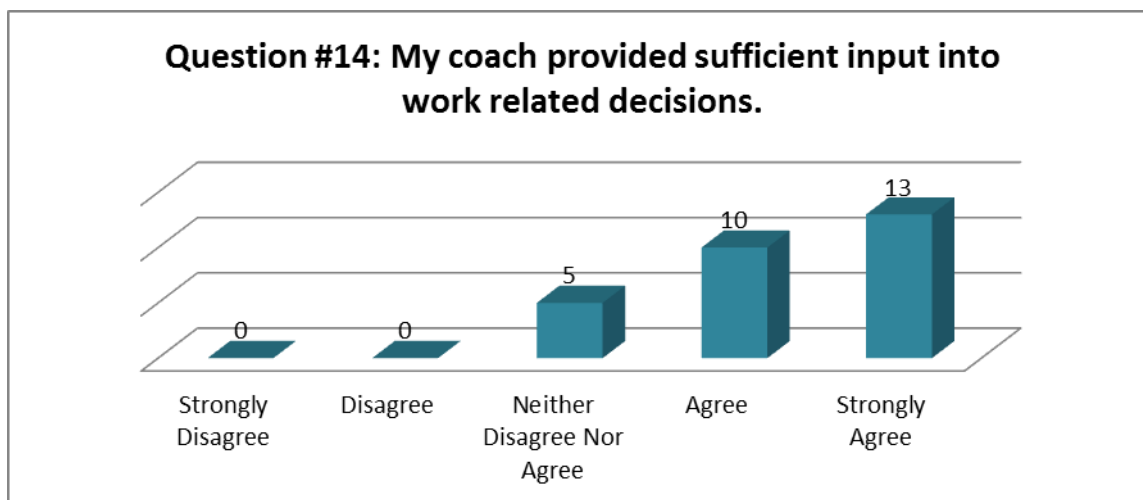


Figure 2. Coach's Input into Work-Related Decisions.

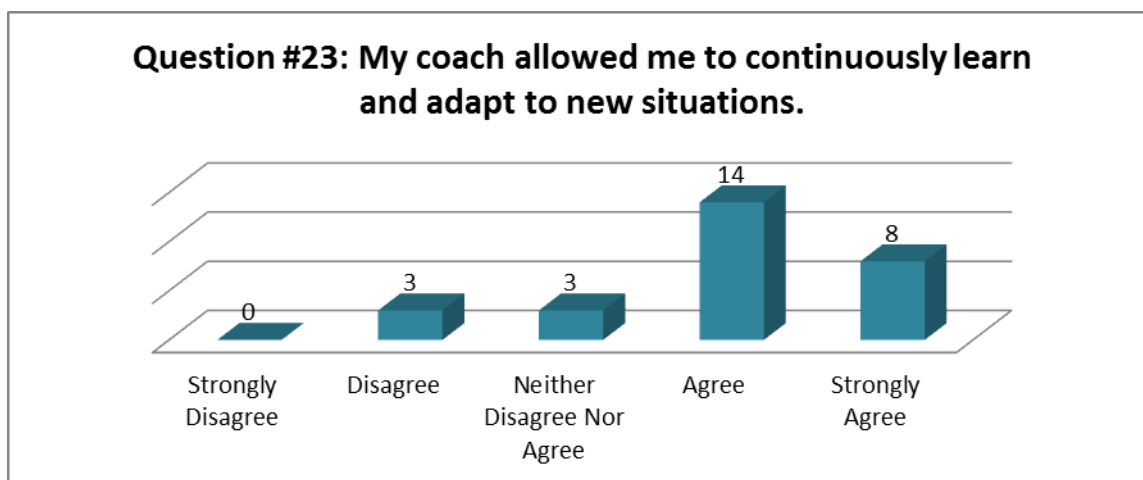


Figure 3. Coach's Allowance of Continuous Learning and Adaptation to New Situations.

With the understanding that many participants did agree with Question 14 and a few people disagreed or were neutral in Question 23, it would appear that

the situation that Sherry described with her coach happened more frequently than was to be expected. The goal of coaching is not to learn about someone else's experience and take that information and somehow adjust it to the situation. The goal is collaboration between the coach and new principal to find solutions. It is important the knowledge that coaches bring to coaching, however the coach and the program need to be mindful of how that experience is being utilized. As the proverb states: "Give a man a fish, you feed him for a day. Teach him to fish and you feed him for a lifetime." Recounting stories for a new principal does nothing but giving them information about what the coach did. It does not help the new principal discover the solutions to issues that face them at their school.

Training Provided by the GCS Coaching Model. Training that was provided was another aspect of the GCS Coaching Model's design that participants felt were beneficial to them during the first year of the principalship, as seen in Figure 4. In addition to the survey, the interviewed principals discussed this topic at some length during their interviews.

From the interviews, the principals agreed on the training that was provided during their monthly meetings and how the topics that were covered during their meetings were relevant to issues they were facing in their schools. However, the principals felt they should have more input into what the meetings and training. With monthly meetings focusing on particular topics, participants collectively felt that the themes were useful overall, but not useful to everyone.

Since coaching is such a personalized experience, the principals did note that the meetings where they were able to collaborate on issues pertaining to them and could receive feedback from peers were quite useful.

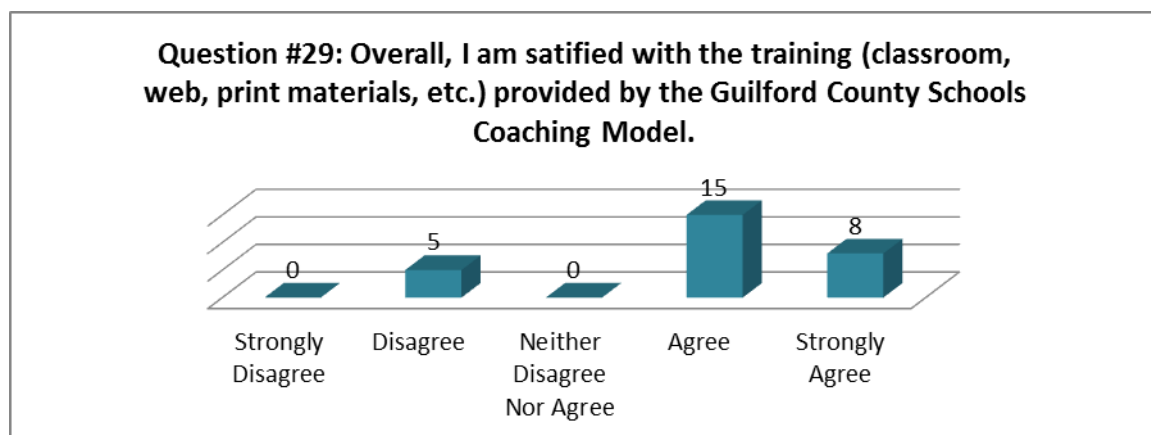


Figure 4. Overall Satisfaction of Training and Materials Provided by the Coaching Model.

Lawrence Weaver mentioned how he was receiving training on instruction and curriculum and how to improve it in his school. However, it was not an area that he needed to focus on due to his extensive background in curriculum. His needs were in turning around a low-performing school that had little community support. Linda Shelton had mentioned a similar experience. Some of the topics covered such as teacher evaluation was not beneficial to her due to her already being proficient in those areas and it was not an area that she was working on with her coach. Sherry described her thoughts about the monthly meetings and trainings:

I think the main thing we're [new principals] looking for is how to handle our particular situations so I'm not sitting with others in their meetings but I think a common thread I do hear about is just being able to solve the problems that are in your building.

Alsbury and Hackmann (2006), Bloom (1999), Knox (2005), Lee (2010), and Libby (2010) have all mentioned in the programs they either created or researched the importance of principal inclusion in decisions with regards to training and meetings. Since the principals and their coaches are best suited to identify the areas of that each new principal needs, it would be highly suggested that the principals and coaches are involved more with the planning of meetings and trainings.

Collaboration time with coaches and other new principals. The third sub-category focused on the time within the program that participants were able to collaborate with their coaches and other new principals. Collaboration time with coaches and fellow new principals was the most highly criticized aspect of the program.

With regard to the amount of time they were able to collaborate with other new principals, participants felt they did not have ample time to be able to work together, as seen in Figure 5.

This is in part due to their busy workload during their first year of the principalship and the demands on them to succeed. Even though the new principals met once a month for their New Principal Meetings and they did benefit from those meetings due to the topic of the month or the discussions that

principals had with the coaches and other new principals, it did not foster the camaraderie that one might expect of such a program. Linda mentioned this in her interview with regards to building a support system from other new administrators:

The support system above all was just something. Five years in, I'm getting to a place where I've hired the right people but I still miss that type of support system. People who are at the same level. People who have the same ability.

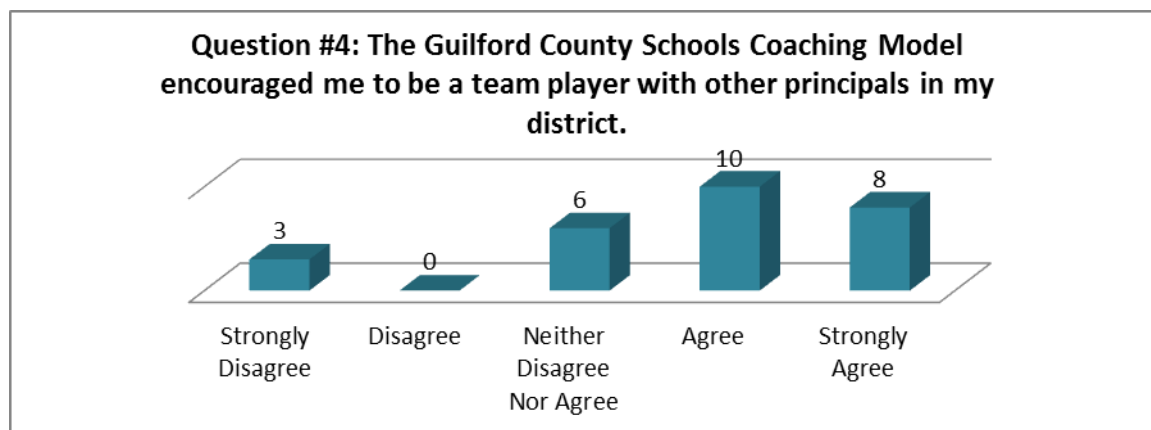


Figure 5. Collaboration with Other Principals in GCS.

In addition to issues with not enough opportunity to collaborate with fellow new principals, all eight principals interviewed voiced the same opinion with regards to time with their coach. They felt they did not have enough time to spend with their coach. Figure 6 shows the new principals thoughts on the time they had with their coach.

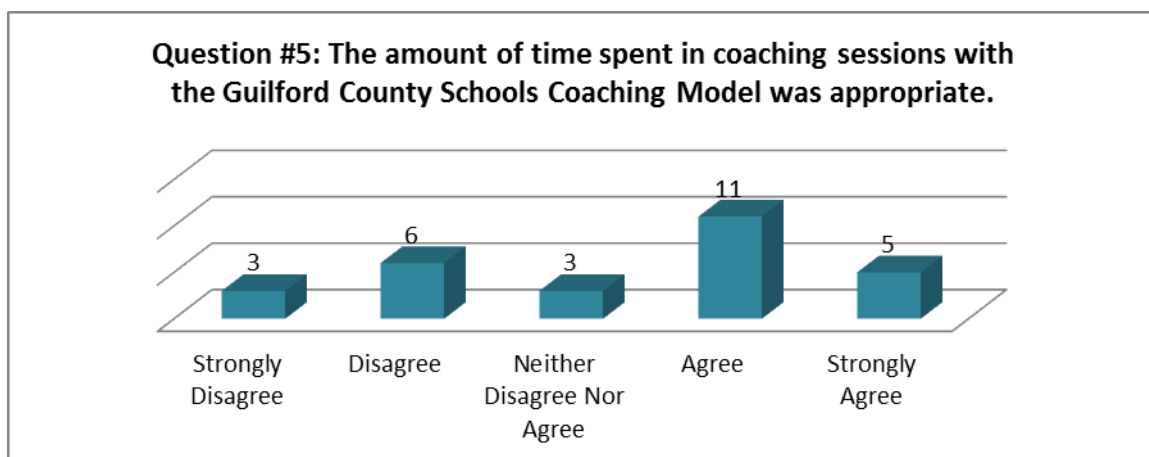


Figure 6. Appropriate Amount of Time Spent in Coaching Sessions.

One of the issues with time spent with the coaches is the starting date for the coach to be paired with the new principal. According to the directors, when the program started, coaches were not paired with the principals until their contracts were signed and funding was in place. This meant delaying the coaching for the new principal until late August or September. For the principals in the first years of the program, this was an issue for them. Sherry stated:

I was named as principal in late June. I started July 1 and I think that I was introduced [to the coach], maybe in September so a couple of months later. It might have been a good idea, actually, to have worked with him [the coach] over the summer, just because there wasn't a lot of guidance over the summer. I was taking it upon myself to call other principals, occasionally new principals but mostly friends that I had who are already in a principalship and just asking, "What are you working on right now?," "What are the tasks you have coming up next week?," and "What am I missing out on?" so I'm glad I had some connections that way because I think there was too much of a gap in that area.

After discussion with one of the past coaching model directors, it was mentioned that currently the coaches are paired with new principals much earlier in the

summer to help prepare the new principals for the start of the school year. The current director also mentioned that there is now a collaborative meeting in the summer before school starts to allow the coach to meet their coachees for the year.

Furthermore, according to the contract information provided by the directors, coaches must attend at least one face-to-face meeting a month with their new principals. To the principals interviewed, that was not enough time. Meetings between the new principals and their coaches varied based on the agreement with the principal and the coach. Some of the participants mentioned that they met with their coaches twice a month, but only for an hour to an hour and a half. Some coaches would only meet once a month with the new principal, but would stay half the day or the whole day with the principal. Even though the participants had access to their coaches by phone or email in addition to the monthly or bi-monthly visits, it was not enough. As Melissa noted:

I wish we had more time with our coach. I wish I'd had a coach my second year. It just seemed like it wasn't enough even though I had a very helpful coach, somebody I could email, call, just seemed like you needed more of it. If not a second year then maybe a little bit more time in your first year of coaching. I think the time aspect is what hurts the most.

Sharon stated:

It [the coaching process] needs to be more comprehensive. Once a month is not enough. New principals need constant contact and support and not just phone calls.

It should also be stated that Guilford County Schools has allowed coaches to stay on for a second year with their coachees as long as there is enough funding. However, for the principals who only had their coach for one year and started later in the year, the data speaks volumes about their time with their coach.

Category 3: Interactions with the Coach

The pairing of a new principal to the right coach is the most crucial aspect of the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model. Successful pairings equate to successful new principals. As it is in the world of sports, the key figure of the success of a team is the coach and his or her ability to lead their team to victory. A great coach understands the players' abilities and uses them to build a winning team. A great coach addresses with players' weaknesses and bolsters the player to strengthen those areas. A great coach supports his or her team members.

As the world of education continues to change, the significance of creating strong leaders for our schools is of the utmost importance. Strong leaders change schools to be adaptable for whatever may come and are supportive of the needs of staff, students and the community. However, the new leaders of today need support themselves. With education constantly changing, the new principals of today's schools need guidance from someone that can devote their time to that principal and their only job is to ensure that the principal is successful. The key to creating successful, confident new principals is to

empower them with coaches who have “walked the path” and understand the unique and individualized needs of being a new principal. As in sports, the coach is the key to a successful winning team and in this case, it is the school, the students, staff and community that win.

When talking with the principals with regards to their coaches and the experiences they had during their time with the coach, all the principals highly regarded their coaches. From each of the interviewed principals, the experience with their coach made the difference between “sinking and swimming.” Even though each coaching experience was individualized amongst the principals, several aspects of the coaching experience were similar. Level of trust between the coach and new principal, the conversations between both parties and the listening abilities of the coach were valued the most with the principals. Figure 7 shows all of the participants’ view of the relationship between the coach and the new principal.

To better understand the personalized relationship that is created between a new principal and their coach and to recognize the common practices that lead to successful coaching within the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model, the best people to tell the story of their coaching relationship is the principals themselves. The following presented data is to not only allow for the principal’s side of the story to be heard, but also to allow an inside glimpse into the benefits of coaching relationship to new principals.

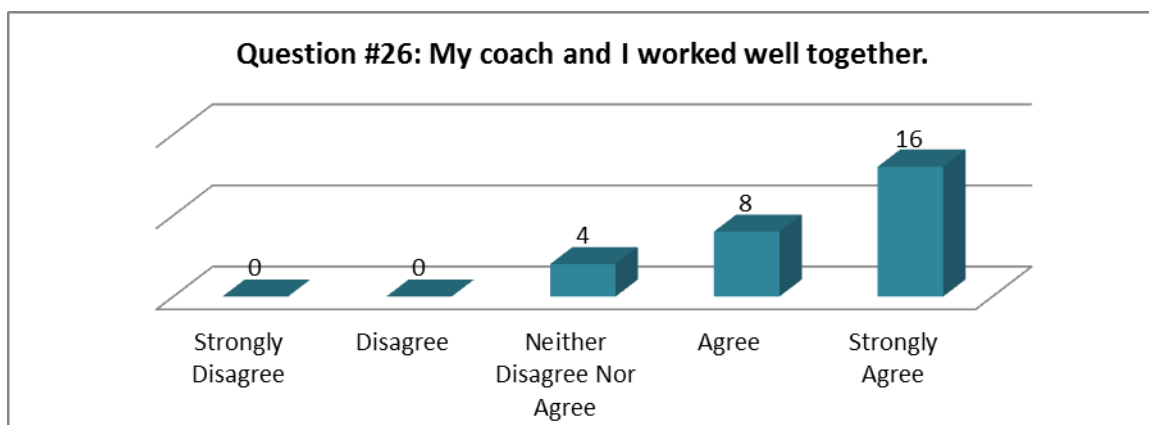


Figure 7. Ability of New Principal to Work with Their Coach.

Linda. At the time of coaching, Linda Shelton had been a principal in an elementary school. Her previous experience in administration had been as an elementary assistant principal. Before her coaching started, Linda had a rough road even before the school year started. The elementary school was being worked on and there was no permit to occupy the building. The student population had almost doubled since the end of the previous school year. In addition to everything, she had been left plans by the previous principal, but had almost no guidance on how to accomplish the tasks that were left. Her biggest challenge in her mind was the feeling of support she had when she was in middle school as a teacher, and then again as an assistant principal. In her new school, Linda was the only administrator due to the number of students in the school not qualifying the school for an assistant. There was no one she could turn to for advice or help.

Linda was introduced to her coach in September, where they met every month for at least an hour. After a somewhat rocky start to the school year, Linda and her coach finally got the opportunity to start the coaching process and help Linda find her way through the principalship. One thing that Linda appreciated from her coach was their ability to just listen. As Linda states:

I didn't have anybody to talk to. There was some highly confidential things going on and I couldn't process that stuff with anybody to even know "Am I going in the right direction with this decision?"

Honesty was an important aspect of the coaching relationship to Linda. She wanted her coach to "be blunt and don't sugar coat." Additionally, she appreciated when her coach would guide her through issues she was facing instead of being told what to do. They analyzed situations Linda faced and together discussed possible outcomes. Encouragement was a priority of Linda's coach. As Linda notes:

She [the coach] encouraged me a lot and just saying "Look, you're doing better than you know." She was a confidence booster because there is nobody in this field who sincerely pats you on the back. We get the "You guys are doing a great job. I appreciate everything that you all are doing for our kids," but they don't really get to see what you're doing. So, the value you place on what they say is supposed to be real.

Her coach would encourage her to keep going, even when Linda was ready to give up and not come back. Her coach would tell her at the end of each session: "You're doing a good job. Even on your worse day, you better believe you're doing a good job." When the job became tough, Linda knew she could turn to

her coach for help. One example of her coach being a resource was when she had budgeting issues.

It would feel like that sometimes the pressure was so heavy. That year I had like three budgets and one of them was over two million dollars and nobody had ever talked to me as an AP. As an assistant principal, you don't get to fool with money, you don't get to touch money really. You may get to order books or an afterschool program or something buy actually sitting down with the budget wasn't something I leaned in my assistant principalship. She [the coach] took me through the process of analysis basically. "What was the ultimate goal? Who are the key players?" She helped kind of walk me through steps like that.

Another issue Linda felt she had to deal with during her first year of her principalship was time management. When the coach would attend the sessions at Linda's school, the coach could see how frequently Linda would be called to do something or the amount the phone rings. Her coach would ask her questions such as "Have you eaten today?" or "Have you gone to the bathroom today?" When Linda would say no, the coach stepped in to help her understand her schedule because she was constantly on the go in the school to the point they created a daily schedule for Linda so she would not become bogged down in the myriad of issues, emails and phones calls that could wear down a new principal.

In reflection of her time during coaching, the one thing that Linda valued most with her coach was the conversations. They played vital importance in her success during the first year. She did feel the time that she and her coach spent visiting classrooms was unbeneficial since that was a strength of hers from her

time as an assistant principal. The impact of coaching however has changed how Linda manages her school. One result of coaching that she does differently is the creation of systems in place to ensure that everything had a process, which were not in place before. She appreciated the support that was given to her by her coach and felt that the pairing of the coach and her was a good fit.

Rob. Elementary has always been a part of Rob Johnson's life. From starting his career as an elementary teacher, he went on to become an elementary assistant principal and now is an elementary principal. His strength lied in curriculum since being a teacher and AP at the elementary level. However, understanding and prioritizing the issues of the school was one aspect of the principalship he struggled with. As he states:

We're dealing with everything that comes at you at one time and knowing how to prioritize what's important, what needs to be taken care of right now, what can be put on the back burner for a little bit.

Rob was introduced to his coach in August, approximately a month after he was hired. He appreciated meeting at the school, because like Linda, he was the only administrator in the school. At each bi-monthly meeting, Rob and his coach would typically meet for an hour or so discussing the issues he was dealing with. One aspect of coaching that Rob felt he benefitted from was his coach's ability to be a good listener and asking the right questions to help him. As he describes:

She [the coach] never really told me what to do and she didn't really give me the answers but she would listen and she would ask questions. I had some really challenging staff members so there were some cultural issues and some cultural challenges. The coach was really good at listening and asking me questions and she did provide some suggestions and things that she thought might be helpful.

Rob also appreciated the availability of his coach. He regarded her as providing "therapist support" and could be talked to at any time. He states:

She [the coach] was available via phone any time that I needed her and it didn't matter if it was 9 o'clock at night, she would answer the phone.

Rob mentioned that he would have preferred her to come to the school more often. The coach did provide him a weekly email that kept him going or offered some information regarding professional information or tips that were relevant to what he was doing or going through at that time. Lastly, his coach was his cheerleader, always reminding him things that he was doing right. Rob mentioned that one of his faults is focusing on everything that he's not doing right, but his coach helped him focus on the things he was doing right. She helped him understand the culture of his school and remembering to acknowledge teachers differently.

In reflection, Rob felt his sessions the second year were beneficial. He was fortunate to have his coach back for a second year and he felt the coaching sessions were more productive. Rob did appreciate the fact that his coach did not have any affiliation with Guilford County Schools because he could be honest and open with his coach without the fear of his job being in jeopardy due to

something he said during coaching. One issue he had with his coaching was the lack of the conversations about “let’s look at academics, let’s look at teaching, let me [the coach] give you some guidance on how to talk to a teacher when their performance is not good.” He felt he needed more of that and more time with the coach.

Denise. Denise Wright’s journey to the principalship started as an elementary teacher. She then became an assistant principal in a middle school and then journeyed back to elementary to become a principal. Just as the previous two principals, Denise was the sole administrator in her building during her time of coaching. Before coaching, one of the biggest hurdles she had to face was time. As she states:

As a principal without an assistant principal, I was able to get into the classes as much as I would like to because of other expectations and other requirements that are put upon us. I am learning now and one of the challenges that I’m finding is that being a new principal, I’m wanting to make sure that I get a full picture of what’s going on, trying to work with new people.

Another concern of Denise’s was her ability to recognize and actively address teachers that are not performing as expected. She felt unsure of the time when a teacher should be written up or Human Resource needed to be notified of issues with a teacher.

Denise’s journey with her coach began quite soon after she was hired in July of her first year. After a summer workshop later that month, she was introduced to her coach and coaching sessions were then planned. Denise had

her coach for one year. She would meet with her coach once a month, typically for half a day. She preferred the meeting to be on her school grounds because it gave her coach the opportunity to become familiar with the staff and the school. Every session started with how Denise was doing and how things were going.

During her time in coaching, one piece of the coaching process that she most valued was the confidentiality of coaching. Denise described:

It gave me that person to go toward if I needed someone to sit down and confide in. I didn't feel out selected in what I talked with them about, but that person was very instrumental in helping me out when I needed help.

To Denise, her coach was a valuable resource. The coach would help her by finding resources that she needed to answer whatever problem or question she had. In addition to her coach providing resources, she felt the whole program was a valuable resource.

Denise stated:

I think the whole coaching process, not necessarily just the coach, but being able to meet with other participants that are also the new principals in that coaching model was very beneficial because we had an opportunity to meet once a month after school hours and getting together, being able to share along with our coaches, I felt was needed.

In reflection of her time during coaching, Denise has changed the way that she observes her teachers. When conducting walk-throughs, she and her coach would discuss things to look for in the classroom and the teaching practice of the teacher. Those processes are still apart of how she conducts walk-throughs.

Her coaching relationship best benefitted when they were walking about the school and making observations as a team and then analyze together their observations. The times when her coach would come and just sit with her were unbeneficial she felt.

Lawrence. As the only principal interviewed that came from a high school, Lawrence's experience during his first year was quite different from the other principals. As a new principal of a low-performing high school, Lawrence was tasked with turning around the school and foster a learning environment where the community, staff and student populations worked together to turn the school around.

Lawrence was introduced to his coach in early August of his first year of his principalship. Officially, he and his coach would meet at the school one or twice a month to discuss Lawrence's progress and to see how things were going. However, Lawrence discussed that he and his coach were in constant contact when they were not meeting. As he describes:

He [the coach] would also be there occasionally for a phone call on the way home. If I had something that I just couldn't figure out or nobody else seemed to have any answers to, I'd pick up the phone and call him or he would shoot me an email in the middle of the week.

When tasked with a job such as turning around a low-performing high school, support becomes key in the coaching relationship. The coach that was paired with Lawrence was an experienced administrator who not only had familiarity of turning around low-performing schools, but also the understanding

of dealing with challenging communities. The support, background knowledge and understanding of the situation lead to quite a successful coaching relationship. The coach was able to provide a multitude of resources to help Lawrence and the school. The coach also assisted him in providing foresight as a principal. His coach would always question him on issues the coach knew he would be facing in the future. Lawrence states:

[The aspect of coaching that I found to be most beneficial] was the support and just the general support of knowing that somebody else has gone through that and this is what they have gone through, but also just having somebody to talk to that could provide insight on things that were going to come down the road that you may not see coming down the road. He brought 20+ years of principal experience into the school and having tackled challenges very similar to mine and was able to share with me “Okay, this is what’s going to happen as a result of you making a policy to do xyz and so you need to be ready for this when people start asking questions about this.”

Participation in walk-throughs was another aspect of the coaching relationship that benefitted Lawrence. The coach would conduct observations with him and together they would collaborate on their analysis of their observations and formulate plans based on the observations to help turn the school around.

In looking back on his time during coaching, Lawrence did find the experience to be beneficial. He felt it gave him an advantage over other principals that have not had a coach alongside of them during their first year as a principal. He felt that he has become more reflective of himself as a principal and of the decisions he makes that impact the school. As Lawrence explains:

I think what I did oftentimes is I would reflect a little bit more. Sometimes as a high school principal, you're just going a million miles an hour and you don't have any downtime and that time I would spend with him would be more reflection than anything and that was always beneficial because, like I said, you're going, going, going.

The one aspect of his time during coaching that he felt that he did not benefit from was the time he and his coach spent discussing curriculum. He did discuss how his coach quickly realized that it was an area that was a strength and needed no further coaching in the area. As Lawrence stated, his coach "adapted well to understanding what we were doing."

Gary. Gary Walden's journey began very similarly to Denise's journey. He began his career as a middle and elementary teacher. After being awarded his administrative degree, he went on to become a middle school assistant principal and finally back to elementary as a principal. However, his experience with the coaching model and his coach were quite unlike the other interviewed principals. Gary's coach just happened to be his former principal's coach when he was serving as an AP, so the rapport and relationship had already been established before formal coaching began. With the familiarity between him and his coach was already present, issues such as trust and confidentiality were not an issue as it is in the beginning with a coach and a new principal.

Gary recounts his time with his coach as "very beneficial." When he and his coach first started their coaching relationship, they would meet every two weeks for about two hours. As the school year progressed, meetings would

change to once a month, but as Gary put it, “she is always a phone call away; she’s always an email away and she’ll come if I need her.”

He describes his biggest challenge was all the juggling. Gary discussed:

The management of my time and priorities, just constantly reprioritizing, putting on this hat, taking off that one, and putting on another one. [It has] been a challenge learning how to balance my interaction, my time, and the energy that I spend toward them to make sure that that time is productive and meaningful.

However, his coach was always reaffirming and reminding Gary that was doing a good job despite any self-doubt or worry he was feeling. He illustrates what his coach would do to reaffirm him:

Every meeting starts off with, “I’ve got some preliminary things, I’ve got some things penciled in that we could talk about, but I really care about what you want to talk about. I really care about what’s on your mind, what’d been a point of frustration or what’s been a challenge since the last time we talked”.

Gary’s openness and support he felt from his coach were additional benefits. He could talk and share with her any challenges he had been dealing with and together they walked through the issue and could discuss a myriad of possible outcomes. His coach would send out weekly leadership minutes that usually contained a piece with regards to leadership. She would accompany him on walk-throughs and discuss with him issues they encountered together and provide feedback. Gary described her as “she’s just another set of eyes.” The feedback provided by his coach was invaluable he believed. His coach would

give him feedback on not only the walk-throughs, but on meetings he led or critiqued him on meetings in which he was a participant.

In reflectance of his time with his coach, Gary described having his coach as someone who could “give me a pulse for where I should be in my first year based on her experience.” The solid feedback he received, he explained as “just priceless.” As a result of his experience, Gary feels that he has been able to process his role as a principal a bit more thoroughly. He feels he is able to “consider aspects of the job with a bit more insight.” He has been able to feel comfortable with his coach, not only due their previous relationship, but because his coach had no official tie to the county. He felt free to be “transparent because I trust the confidentiality.” Overall, Gary has felt the coaching he received has truly prepared him for the job of leading a school.

Mary. As a new middle school principal, Mary Gibson had the sense “she was behind the eight ball” when it came to understanding her responsibility as a new principal. Previously in this chapter, I discussed her views on taking on the principalship after two years as an assistant principal and her feeling of unpreparedness as she began her first year as a principal. Mary also discussed one of her other large challenges that faced her as a new principal was follow-through with people. As she discussed:

As an AP, you have your set responsibility and that’s all you have to do, but as a principal, following through and making sure everybody else is doing what they’re supposed to be doing was another one of those things that I was always of the mindset, “When somebody tells you to do something, you just went and did it.”

Mary was introduced to her coach prior to the start of the school year and once school began, they would meet at least once a week for about an hour. On occasion, she would stay half of the day to complete walk-throughs or whatever was needed. Mary was fortunate enough to have her coach for a second year. What is interesting about the relationship between Mary and her coach is they typically would not meet on campus as the other principals had done. Mary had felt it was conducive to their relationship because she could have her coach's undivided attention.

When asked about her coach, Mary could only respond with "incredible."

In her own words:

I felt like there was nothing that I couldn't call her about at any time of the month. I felt like I was the only person she had [to coach] because I just felt like she was available anytime I needed her.

Despite the fact during her first year in the coaching model, her coach was involved with four or five other new principals, Mary felt that her coach was there for her. The coach would coach her through what she believed would be a crisis, talked her through the issue and helped her realize that it might have not been such a big issue. Her coach was always positive and encouraging to her, especially when Mary had to deal with some tough challenges in her job. She felt comfortable with talking with her coach because she had no fear of information getting out to the wrong parties. The feedback that was provided was also beneficial Mary thought. Mary described the feedback as "a lot of

instructional support, how to help with instruction, how to help that struggling teacher, how to identify things during a walk-through.” Mary also had to learn, with the support of her coach, how to be a cheerleader for her school. She described her issue as:

I’m not a big rah-rah type of person. I just kind of expect people to do what they’re supposed to do. One of the things I really struggled, and I still struggle with, is being that big cheerleader type and just making sure I was taking care of my teachers and making sure I was just doing some of the little things that I would not have thought of.

As a result of her coaching, Mary believes that coaching has helped her to be more patient with individuals. She describes having her coach that first year was “huge” because it gave her the confidence to do the job. Coaching has allowed her to become the cheerleader for her school because when she is at her school, as she explains:

You have to put the teachers first, the kids first. Being and getting out and getting in front of the community, getting in front of parents, and bringing them in and bringing the community in, bringing the businesses in because all those things have an important role and can often benefit you and your kids whenever possible.

Melissa. As the other middle school principal interviewed, Melissa could relate to many of the issues that Mary faced as a new middle principal. With her administrative experience prior to becoming a principal in high school, one would think the transition would be effortless. However, Melissa felt very similarly to Mary with regards to her perceived preparedness, which was discussed earlier in

this chapter. Her experience as an assistant principal did not prepare her, she felt, for navigating the principalship during her first year.

Melissa's coach was introduced to her during the New Principal's Orientation that Guilford County Schools holds every summer for their new principals. She and her coach would meet during the school year once a month. The time her coach spent on her campus would differ depending on what they needed to discuss, but most coaching sessions would be all day. It was interesting to learn about what her coach would do if Melissa became busy with a situation. Melissa explains:

What I liked is my coach didn't wait on me, so if I had a parent in the morning or something like that, my coach would get out and visit my building, learn my staff, learn from my students, so she could provide me on some feedback that they [the coach] saw without me and then provide me with feedback on things they saw in the building that we saw together.

In addition, her coach would take her to visit others schools to see what they were doing and help Melissa with ideas to implement in her school.

One of the major benefits of coaching that Melissa felt was her coach's ability to be a sounding board. Melissa knew she could email or call her coach about a situation that had happened and her coach would walk her through and discuss options of how to handle it. Her coach would not tell her what to do or say "this is what I would do," but shared steps they would take to help navigate through the problem.

Another aspect of her coaching experienced most valued was the feedback provided by her coach. Whether it was from walk-throughs, from a discussion they were bouncing between themselves, or during a meeting with other new principals at the monthly new principals meetings, the valuable feedback helped Melissa with deciding on critical issues she faced in her school. She could have critical conversations with her coach and other principals about what was happening in her school and collaborate on possible solutions for the issues she was handling at that moment.

In Melissa's opinion, she felt her experience with her coach was important.

As she explains:

I think in any field that you're in is to have somebody who has been there before and can help you out as you are entering into a new profession so I do, I really do think it helped me.

She describes her experience as "a positive one because I had a really good coach who was very supportive." Melissa went on to discuss how her coach was vested and interested in her. As for what she had taken away from her coaching, she stated her coach taught her to be a better listener. The one issue she had was the lack of time with her coach. Melissa had her coach for only one year and she felt it was not enough.

Sherry. Of all the principals, Sherry Duncan has had, in my opinion, one of the most interesting career paths of all the new principals. Starting her career as an elementary teacher, then to becoming a curriculum facilitator, then to a

high school assistant principal and finally back to elementary as a principal, it has been quite a diverse career path.

Sherry was name principal of her elementary school in June and began her principalship in July of her first year. However, she was not introduced to her coach until the school year had started. Once introduced to her coach, Sherry and her coach would typically meet twice a month for about an hour and a half. Once coaching began, Sherry and her coach would focus on what she felt was her biggest challenge, time management. Sherry explains:

My biggest challenge was time management, keeping up with emails and tasks that need to be done. I found myself struggling with just being able to get done all the other tasks that were still there at five o'clock at night.

One thing that Sherry's coach did for her to help her out was to let her lead the discussions between them. She felt comfortable with just being able to discuss with her coach everything that she was struggling with at that time. To assist her, her coach would ask questions about possible solutions to her concerns, challenge her to think more deeply about the effect of her actions on her school and guide her to a right path that is in the best interest of the school. As she describes:

One thing that my coach did was just sort of give me permission to address what I needed to address. You've got to take care of certain things and sometimes that means that others won't understand, but it's interesting when we talk through what I'm struggling with with him [the coach] and being able to give feedback that really does relate because he's been there.

Outlook on the future was another beneficial aspect of coaching that aided Sherry. She discussed how her coach would look ahead at things that were coming up on her radar and together they collaborated to create a plan of action to address upcoming events.

In reflectance, Sherry does believe that the coaching model is a good support program, even though she wished she had been paired with her coach soon in the summer so as to help her prepare for the upcoming year. As an experienced principal today, she mentioned that there are several things she does differently because of her coaching experience. Her confidence level is higher and she feels better able to handle and negotiate difficult situations. She has improved self-assurance that she is on the right track when leading her school. One issue Sherry felt that did not benefit her during her coaching was the inability of her coach to spend time on the particulars of issues she was facing. She states:

Sometime I felt we could have spent more time on what are the particulars of your [the coach's] situation that are factors that kind of steer it one way or the other and trying to learn more about my situation at hand instead of telling stories about prior experiences that he's had.

Category 4: New Principals' Reflection of the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model

This final category will focus on the overall perception of the new principals of the coaching model. This category was divided into two sub-categories: the new principal's viewpoint of the coaching impact on the school

and the new principal's viewpoint of the coaching impact on them as an educational leader.

The new principal's viewpoint of the coaching model's impact on the school. This sub-category focused on how the new principals viewed the coaching impact on the school. Topics such as decision making in the best interest of the school and understanding the principal's role in the school were discussed.

The principals interviewed expressed similar ideas when discussing the coaching model's impact on their school. Many of the principals expressed "doing things differently" because of coaching, as seen in Figure 8.

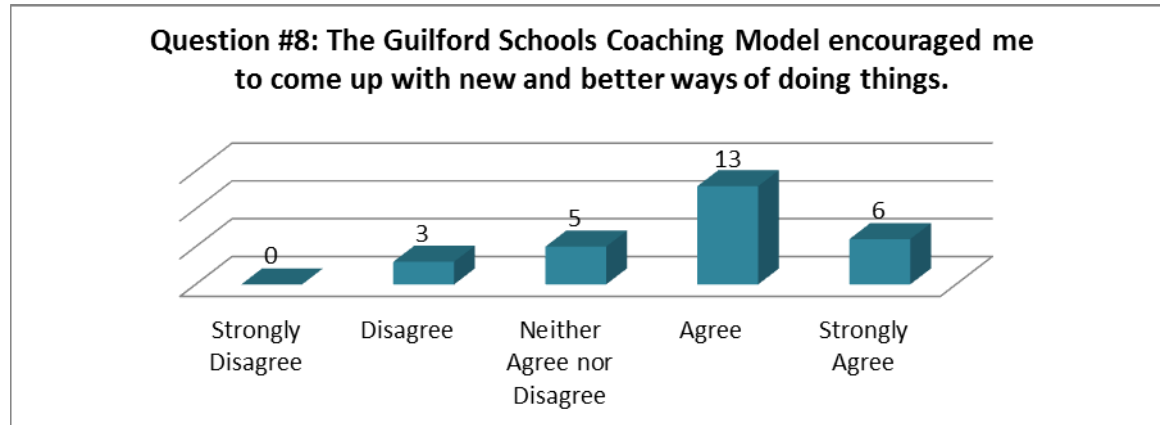


Figure 8. New and Better Ways of Doing Things.

As new principals, the overall results of the coaching's impact on the school has been successful. The new principals felt that the coaching model provided what was necessary to get the job done as seen in Figure 9.

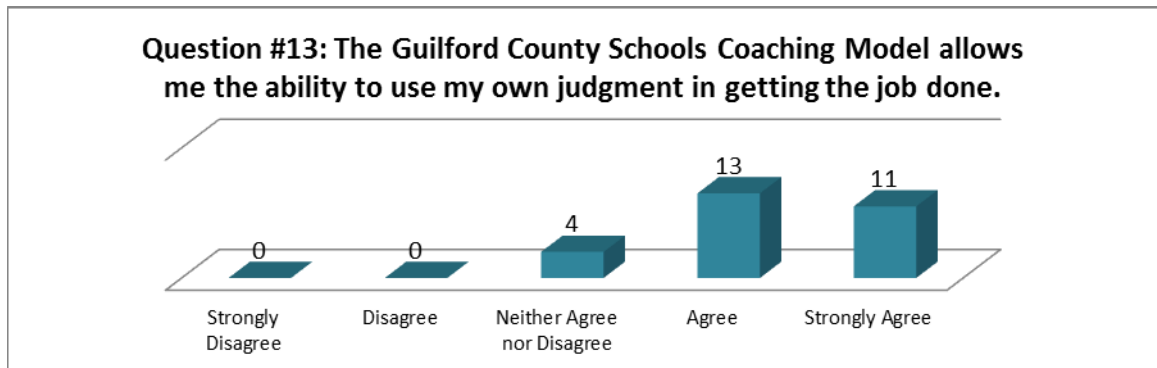


Figure 9. Ability to Use Own Judgment in Getting the Job Done.

The principals felt confident to be able to lead their school and make the best decisions based on the needs of their school. It can also be noted that the principals felt that the coaching helped boost their confidence when dealing with school issues.

Linda, in discussing managerial systems stated:

She [the coach] and I talked about just putting systems in place at the beginning to make sure there was a different process for everything. Her thing was, "Look, you can't be everything to everybody all the time. Somebody's got to take on some help."

The new principal's viewpoint of the coaching model's impact on them as an educational leader. This sub-theme focuses on how coaching improved the principal as an educational leader. The following survey question relates to the success that the principals perceived after their time of coaching.

Overall, participants felt that the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model did help them become successful principals. However, with success having various meanings to different people, the interviewed principals were asked

about their perceived level of success as a new principal, as seen in Figure 10. Many of the participants responded that their level of success was “much higher” than if they were not provided a coach for their first or second (in some cases) year.

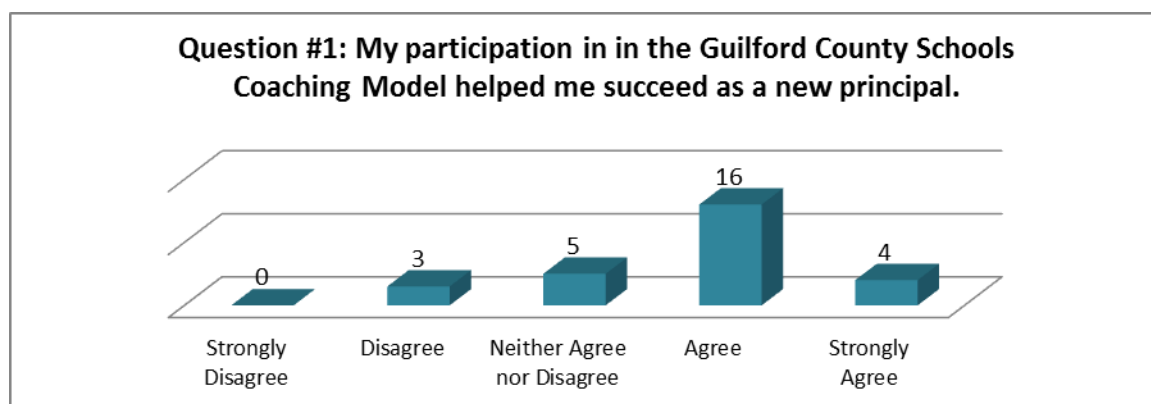


Figure 10. Perceived Level of Success as a New Principal.

When the principals were asked about their perceptions on their coaching and how they felt it prepared them for success, all eight principals felt the coaching did help prepare them for that first year of the principalship. As Mary commented:

It [coaching] gives you the confidence that I think you often, a lot of folks don't have, and especially for me coming out, I just wasn't as confident as I would have liked to have been in my first year and so having a coach was huge.

Rob stated:

I think it helped. Mostly, I would say. In the areas of dealing with the culture of the school, helping to prioritize a little bit and realize sometimes just because some things may seem like a 911 case, it's not.

With the focus of the coaching model on providing support to new principals, it can be concluded that the county needs to be clear with principals of the expectations as seen in Figure 11. Coaches can assist the principals in meeting county expectations only if they are clear.

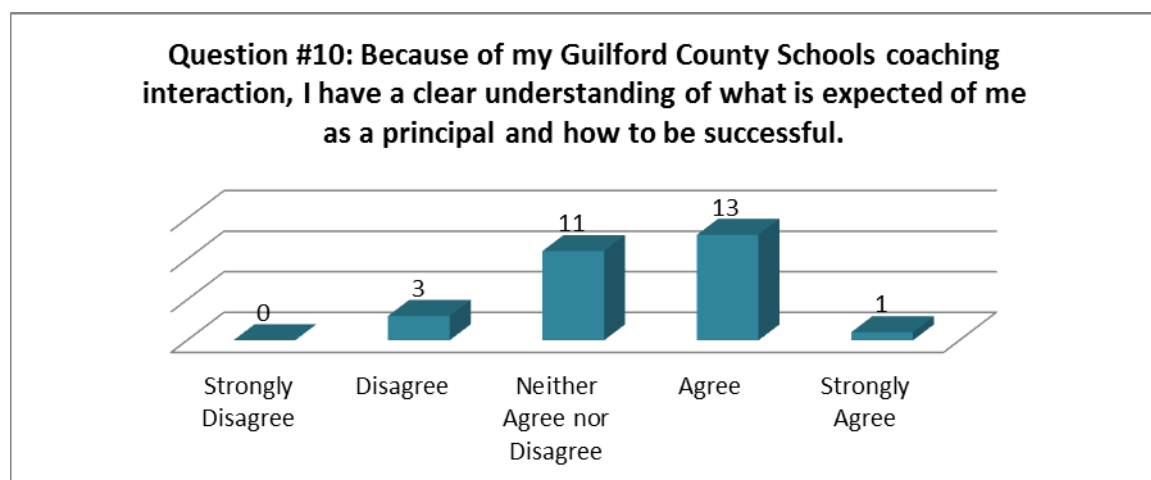


Figure 11. Understanding of Principal Expectations.

Rob stated:

At times I felt like we were kind of just, you know, we knew where we were going, we knew the destination be we didn't pre-plan a route.

Linda commented on having the tools necessary for success in the principalship as getting ready for a basketball game:

Before we ever played a game, we went through a process and it was rigored so that when we got in those tough times or those situations, if I got files, I knew what was getting ready to happen. I knew I had to mind like “Okay, free throws. I’ve got to have my elbow up. I’ve got to follow through.” So the fundamentals were kind of planned so we would practice before hand and then when I got in crunch time I didn’t have to stress out. I knew what I was going to do.

This is a crucial point that the principals made in the interviews. If the new principals are not given the right tools or fundamentals to be successful, no amount of coaching will be beneficial.

Overall, principals who participated in the coaching model were satisfied with the coaching model, as seen in Figure 12. Sherry stated, “I would say it’s a great program and I think that every principal should have it.” This statement was echoed through the other interviews. Rob stated, “I enjoyed the coaching experience and it was helpful.” Through the eyes of the principals, the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model can be seen as a benefit and should continue to support the new principals of the county.

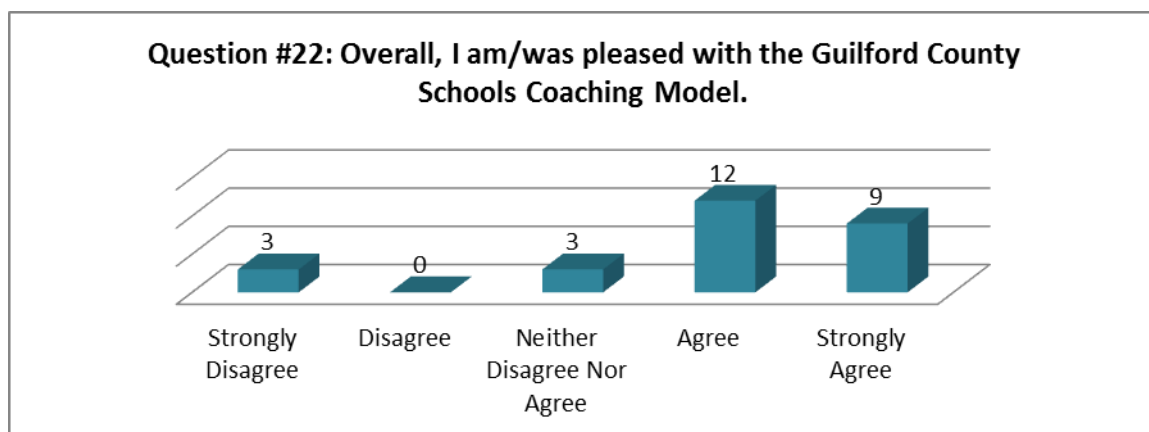


Figure 12. Overall Impressions of the GCS Coaching Model.

Overall Analysis

As shown in the data, the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model has taken great strides in preparing new principals for the rigors of the first years of the principalship. By supporting new principals with the three elements that ensure for a successful coaching experience that were discussed in the review of literature (coaches that are not affiliated with Guilford County, competent coaches that ask questions, challenge assumptions, and listen, and creating a relationship of trust confidentiality between the coach and new principal), Guilford County has created a program that, as a whole, has been successful in the eyes of those that have participated. From the training and resources that were provided to the knowledge and skills of the coaches, the new principals of Guilford County have benefitted immensely from the support that has been given to them.

From the data that were gathered through the interviews and the survey results, common themes emerged as seen in Table 6, which presents themes that were discovered in the categories during analysis of the interviews and survey data.

Table 6

Common Themes from Categories

Category	Themes
Perception of new principal coaching expectations and needs prior to coaching	Expectations of coaching
	Preparedness coming into the principalship

Table 6

(Cont.)

Category	Themes
Assessment of the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model Design	Principal input into program decisions
	Adequate provision of resources
	More collaboration time for new principals to meet with coaches and other new principals
Interaction with the coach	Support of the new principal through the experience brought by the coach
	Support of the new principal through effective communication with the coach
	Support of the new principal through active participation in the new principal's school
New principals' reflections of the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model	Confidence and level of success to lead school

Theme 1: Expectations of Coaching

As seen in the first category, participants were able to express their thoughts on what coaching is about and their expectations on what a coach should be to a new principal. The common theme among the principals was the expectation that the coach would be someone who supported them through trust, feedback and knowledge of the principalship. Rob discussed his belief on what a coach should do:

I think of a mentor, someone who will look at my practice, look at what I'm doing and guide me, who will give corrective feedback, if there's something that I am clearly making wrong decisions about. Like, if you're playing a sport, if you're not practicing certain things the right way, you [the coach] would give me guidance and feedback.

Theme 2: Preparedness Coming into the Principalship

Participants also discussed obstacles they felt they would have to overcome in becoming successful principals. From the interviews, the preparedness for the principalship came in many forms, ranging from issues with time management to exposure to principal duties as an assistant principal. Time management was the biggest issue that the principals discussed when talking about their preparedness for the principalship. With this job, a principal must take on many roles during the course of a school day, let alone a school year. This issue with juggling the many roles that a principal must assume leads into the issue of the principal being ready for the job in the first place. All of the principals came into the principalship with less than five years administrative experience. When the time spent as an assistant principal was averaged amongst the principals, the average time spent as an AP was just over two years. For some people, two years is enough time to grasp the skills needed to move into the principalship. However, after analyzing the responses, assistant principals that are planning to move into the principalship need to have more exposure to the roles and duties of the principal.

Theme 3: Adequate Provision of Resources

The second category ventured into the actual Guilford County Schools Coaching Model's design. Designing a program to meet as many of the needs of new principals as possible can be challenging. Nevertheless, the overall design of the program was found favorable with the principals, as seen above in Figure

12. The resources such as trainings and articles regarding the principalship that were given to the principals were quite invaluable. The way the coach was paired with the principal was also found to be favorable. By building a relationship on trust and security, principals were able to “find their footing” during their first year(s) courtesy of their coaching experience. This is partially due to the fact that the coaches have never worked for Guilford County Schools.

However, several design flaws were discovered in the program’s design that the principals found issue with. With much riding on the success of the new principals, the many pieces that create this program must be efficient and successful.

Theme 4: Principal Input into Program Decisions

The first issue the principals discussed as a concern of the program was the lack of principal input into the program itself. The principals discussed, as shown in the findings, that they found value in the trainings provided, however the trainings needed to be more personalized. As Lawrence had discussed, he did not need training on curriculum due to his extensive background and success already in that area. It was also discussed how the trainings need to be focused on what is happening with the new principals at that moment. Sherry had mentioned how she would go to meetings and hear about what was happening with other principals at their schools, but not having the opportunity to explore those issues. This problem of not having the opportunity to really sit down and collaborate lead to the final theme of this category, the need for more

collaboration time between the new principals, the coaches and other new principals.

Theme 5: More Collaboration Time for New Principals to Meet with Coaches and Other New Principals

When given the opportunity to discuss issues that they faced as new principals with others that were, quite possibly, going through the same challenges, it was beneficial to the principals to be able to collaborate on strategies with the principals, but also the coaches that were present at the new principal meetings. Time outside of those meetings, however, to discuss and collaborate was not enough. Even the time with the coaches was not enough. With the exception of two of the principals, each one had their coach for two years. Of those six principals, all but one said that they could have had another year. The two principals that had their coach for one year were the most outspoken with regards to time with their coach. It was the year that Melissa and Denise had participated that the coaches were overburdened with more principals. Melissa described her one year with her coach as “not enough time.” This idea goes back to the first theme in the first category and understanding the needs of new principals when they enter into the principalship. If the fundamental needs of the principals are not being met due to the time constraint with their coaches, then the principal will not be as successful as expected. The obstacles that new principals face should be the focus of the program and what the program designs itself around.

Theme 6: Support of the New Principal through the Experience Brought by the Coach

Out of all the data provided by the survey and interviews, this theme provided the reasoning as to why coaching for new principals in Guilford County was instrumental for their success. The wealth of experience that their coaches brought to the coaching relationship was vital to the success of the new principals. Each coach brought their own experience and knowledge to the relationship and with careful planning by the coaching directors, ensured that the new principals were matched with coaches best suited for their needs. Linda commented on the pairing of her coach as “a good fit,” just as the other principals had made similar comments.

In addition to the wealth of experience that the coaches brought, keeping the principals up-to-date with trends or articles that would help them was also instrumental to the new principals. Lawrence and Gary had both commented on how their coaches would provide materials, articles or other professional development tool to assist them during their first year.

Theme 7: Support of the New Principal through Effective Communication with the Coach

Constant communication with the principals was another benefit they found with their coaching relationship. When looking at the interviews and the survey, there was never a time that the principal could not reach their coach for support. Through visits at the school or off-campus, phone calls or emails, the principals were always able to reach their coaches. What is interesting about this

theme is what was communicated during the visits, phone calls and emails. After reading the interviews, the coaches made the experience about the principals, which is should be. In each of the interviews, the principals described how the coaches would come for their coaching sessions and have something planned out, but usually would not follow it because it was not what the principal needed. Gary had described it best in his interview when his coach would come in and state she had things on her agenda that needed to be discussed, but she would turn it over to Gary to lead the discussion because it was what he needed at the time. This example of what Gary's coach would do to build communication between both parties shows the support, trust and confidentiality that is built between the coach and principal. Without effective communication, there can be no trust to support the coaching relationship.

Theme 8: Support of the New Principal through Active Participation in the New Principal's School

Despite how busy Melissa would be on a day her coach would be in the school, her coach would take the time to learn about her school. All of the principals had mentioned how their coach would take the time to learn about their schools. The coaches would learn about the staff and the school by conducting walk-throughs with and without the principals. Through the feedback given by the coaches, the principals could see their school through a different set of eyes and gain a different perspective on what was occurring in their school. All the principals were pleased at not only the amount of feedback given, but the quality

of the feedback. It truly did allow for them to make informed decisions that would impact their school.

Theme 9: Confidence and Level of Success to Lead School

The new principals' perceived level of success led to this theme. Most of the principals felt successful after their coaching experience. Many of them believed that they had become better educational leaders for their schools. Many of the principals had mentioned in their interviews that they felt that they were not fully confident to take on the responsibility of the principalship. This could be in part to what was discussed in Theme 2. However, the overall impression from the interviews and the survey data was that the principals did feel that their coaching experience did give them the confidence to successfully lead their school. The principals felt that they had attained the knowledge, resources and support needed to continue their success as a principal.

The overall impression of the coaching model has shown it to be successful in assisting principals through the first year of the principalship. As is true with most things, nothing is perfect and the coaching model does have some facets to work on that will be discussed in Chapter V.

Summary

The new principals who participated in this study revealed that the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model is working at helping new principals succeed in the principalship. Even though coaching was a unique experience to each principal, the overall experience of coaching and the coaching model amongst

the principals found related experiences. By using the nine themes created, the data was combined into two overall themes that discussed the overall experiences of the principals during their time of coaching: experience with the program and experience with the coach, which is seen below in Figure 13. Both themes will be discussed in Chapter V. Chapter V concludes with a Review of the Study, Findings and Discussion, Implications for Practice, Recommendations and Researcher's Reflections.

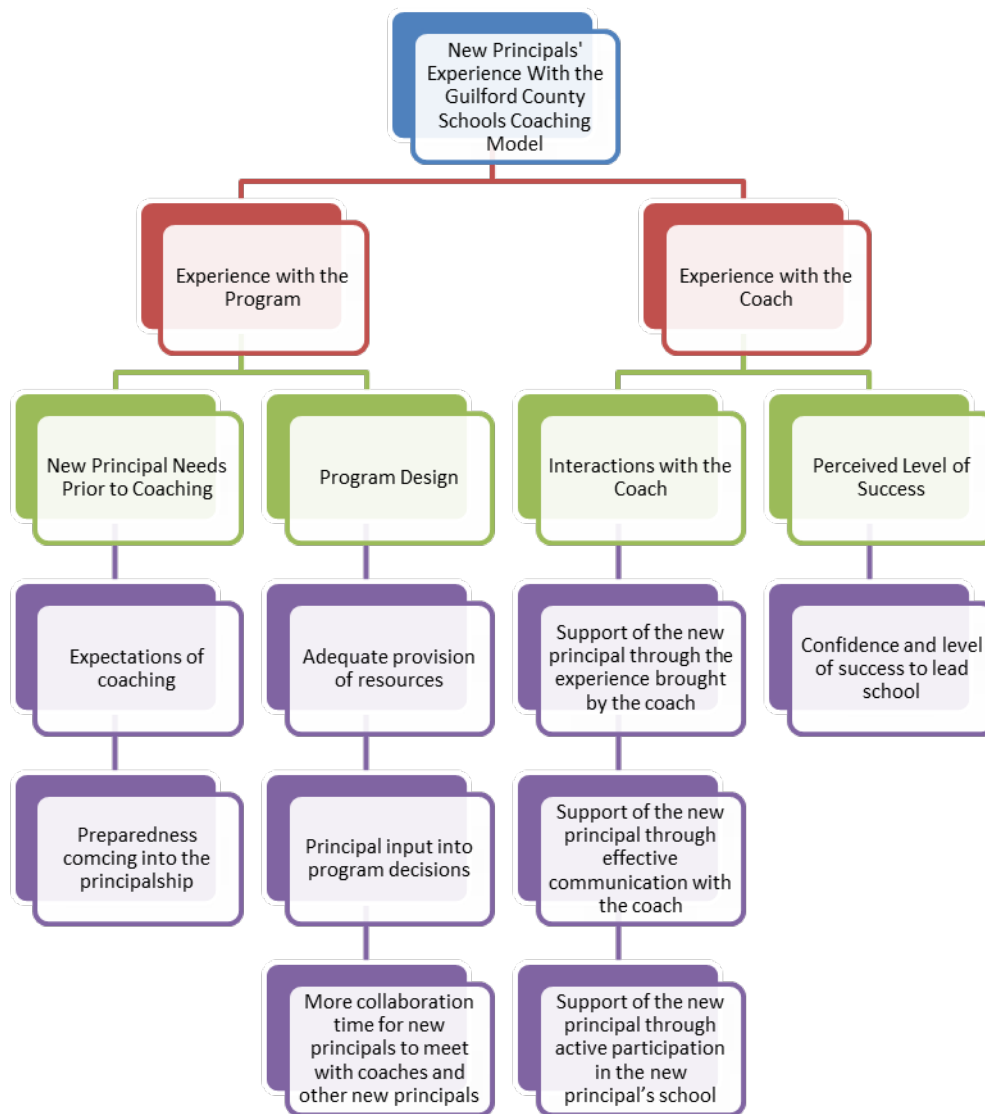


Figure 13. Guilford County Schools Coaching Model Experience Flow Chart.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this final chapter is to provide a review of the research study as an opportunity for discussion as it pertains to the data, pertinent literature, and its correlation to the research questions. The chapter will conclude with implications for practice with regard to the current program, recommendations for further studies, and the researcher's reflections.

Review of the Study

As shown by the pertinent literature and first-hand accounts from Guilford County Schools' new principals, the need for programs to assist new principals with the demands of the principalship has never been greater. Baker (2010), Godwin et al. (2005), Holloway (2004), Kafka (2009), Olson (2007), Reiss (2012), and Wise and Hammack (2011) have all mentioned the complexity and variety of demands and expectations placed upon school leaders have never been greater. The fact that there is a pressing need for effective new school administrators and the need for intensive support in their early years of experience further provides justification for creating meaningful coaching programs for new principals. With Bossi (2008), Kafka (2009), and Stevenson and Bauer (2010) all noting that many new principals do not feel that their administration preparatory program prepared them for the principalship and the experienced isolation in the job, the

responsibility for ensuring that new principals have a successful transition into the principalship and alleviate the “sink or swim” mentality then falls to school districts. The pressure to succeed in today’s education system places a large burden on the principals of our schools, especially new principals.

Many states such as Iowa and Illinois have succeeded in creating meaningful mentoring programs for their new principals. However, with the knowledge that mentoring programs for principals do not provide enough support for principals due to a myriad of issues such as time to meet and little to no effective training on proper mentoring, a coaching model would be the most feasible plan to ensure that the needs of new principals were being met (Bloom et al., 2004). With few coaching programs for new principals established, there has been very little literature about the nature of the programs, and even less information about the success of the programs. However, what information is present has become the foundation for creating meaningful coaching programs for principals.

According to Bossi (2008) and Reiss (2012), coaching models are a completely different way of preparing new principals for the rigors of the principalship. Coaches do not have official ties to the school system they serve, have been successful administrators at various levels of education, and most importantly, serve to alleviate the pressure new principals facing during their first year of principalship (Bloom, 1999; Bloom et al., 2004; Psencik, 2007, 2011; Reiss, 2007). Coaches receive extensive training on coaching strategies and

when to use such strategies to create an individualized experience for the new principal. Data from the coaching programs that have been established regarded coaching as a high, if not the only attributing factor for the success of a new principal. This is in part due to the relationship created between the coach and their principal. Lee (2010) and Libby (2010) both explained in their studies, principals felt more confident in being able to do the job after their experiences with their coaching programs. Bloom (1999), in his study of the New Administrators Program in California, showed that the coaching program helped the new principals, especially in the area of improving student achievement and improving principal confidence. Holloway (2004) posited that new principals valued the benefit of having someone to talk with and consult for advice, lessening the feelings of isolation. It is the coach and the relationship created between the coach and the principal that has allowed coaching programs to be successful.

This study was designed to provide insight into how the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model provided adequate support for its new principals. As stated before, with such insufficient data provided on current coaching programs, the evidence discovered during the study would only provide more information about the success or failure of coaching programs, thus adding to the limited literature about coaching programs available. This series of mini-case studies used a survey and one-to-one interviews to gain insight into the design and intention of the coaching model, but more significantly, the experiences of the

new principals during their time in the coaching model. The information gathered from the surveys lead to the creation of the interview questions for both the principals and the coaching model directors. Twenty-eight principals participated in the survey. Of the original 28, eight principals were selected and participated in the one-to-one interviews as well as the three coaching model directors.

The data gathered from the surveys and the interviews were analyzed and significant phrases and statements were chosen from the interviews once transcribed. Once all the significant phrases and statements were outlined, they were placed into categories. From the categories and the survey responses, four overall categories emerged from the data analysis. These categories were the perception of the new principal's coaching expectations and needs prior to coaching, the perceptions of the focus and purpose of the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model, the principals' assessment of the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model, the interactions with the coach, and the new principals' reflections of the coaching model.

The principals' thoughts about coaching and their perceived needs before coaching encompassed the category. Within this category, two sub-categories emerged as the data showed the differences between each principal and their needs and thoughts on coaching before their coaching began. However, collectively the principals had similar beliefs of what coaching should be and had comparable needs amongst each other as they began their principalship. With such differences among the principals when discussing their concerns, it was

observed that coaching must be an individualized experience to be able to meet the diverse matters of the new principals.

The Guilford County Schools Coaching Model's design was the focus of the second category. Understanding the complex and diverse needs of the new principals of the county and then creating a program to assist those principals was not an easy task. The coaching directors provided that the program's focus was to bring in specialized coaches that the principals needed and could confide in without the threat of evaluation, but would also bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to the coaching relationship. In addition, items such as time with the coach and resources provided by the program for the new principals were discussed. According to the data from the survey and the interviews of the principals, this sub-category emerged as largest problem that the principals had with the coaching model. The resources provided by the program, the coaching model's management, and the opportunity to collaborate with other principals during meetings were found to be invaluable to the principals. However, the scheduled time between the coach and the new principal was insufficient. The principals, both in the survey and interviews, described how the time they had with their coach was not enough.

However, despite the evidence that the time between the coach and the new principal was inadequate, the time during their meetings was invaluable, as the third category discussed. This was the largest category discussed since this was the main purpose of this study. The interaction between the coach and new

principal was discovered to be highly personal and customized for each principal. The category focused on each individual principal's experience with their coach. Principals valued their coaches in many aspects. The trust created between both parties was highly beneficial to the principals. The access to resources and knowledge of experience of the coaches were also highly regarded by the principals. Most importantly, the principals had a sense of success during their first year because of the support provided by their coaches.

The final category focused on the principals' reflection upon the program and its impact on their schools and themselves as leaders. The data indicated that the principals felt successful after their first year of the principalship and believed that they would continue to have success even after completing the coaching model. Many of the principals discussed how they have better management skills and are able to navigate the principalship with confidence.

From the categories that emerged from the data, it can be shown how important supporting new principals is to the field of education. Successful principals can equate to successful schools. Giving new principals the guidance and tools necessary for survival of the first year and beyond is immeasurable. By providing a coaching program that meets the demanding needs of new principals, fewer principals will relate to the "sink or swim" feeling and will have the confidence to do the job to the best of their ability.

Even with a coaching program in place with goals and expectations of supporting new principals through the first year(s) of the principalship, the

success of the program rests on the relationship built between the coach and the new principal. Without the trust and confidentiality between both parties, the potential success of the principal will be hindered. Honesty and openness between the coach and principal will allow the principal to grow professionally and personally. People chosen to take on the roles of the coaches must be well-versed in coaching techniques, but also come with a wealth of experience and knowledge to assist the new principal in almost any possible situation. With much at stake, the success of the principal lies in what their coach does to help them become successful principals.

Findings and Discussion

This case study was designed to learn about the experiences of new principals and their perceived level of success they had while participating in the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model. In this section, the findings will be summarized into two key sections based on the stated research questions: experiences with the program and experiences with the coach.

Experience with the Program

The first research question asked how the new principals experienced the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model during their involvement, including their overall impression of how the program was designed and implemented. In response to the second research question focusing on the principals' perceived level of success during the first year, many of them felt that this program helped in many ways and gave them a better chance of success during that first year of

the principalship. Based on the survey data and interviews, the new principals found the program to be a positive experience. Since all new principals to Guilford County are required to participate in the program, the principals felt that it was worth their time and worth the time and investment on the part of the school district.

During their involvement in the GCS Coaching Model, the new principals felt comfortable with the program and felt the program was beneficial. One of the most beneficial aspects of the program was the capacity in which their coaches helped them. Since the coaches had no official ties to the district, the new principals could open up to their coaches and seek the assistance they needed to be successful. As mentioned in Chapter II, the key to a successful coaching program is the relationship created between the coach and the new principal. As Bloom (1999), Psencik (2011) and Reiss (2007) mentioned, coaches are former, successful principals who are not involved directly with the coaching program or have been affiliated with the school system in which the new principal is associated. Since there is no official evaluation tool used during the time of coaching by the coaches, the new principals were able to confide in and trust their coaches. As several of the interviewed principals mentioned, having someone from outside the district who is there to support them in a non-evaluative role gave them the confidence to take full advantage of the coaching model and to succeed in their first year.

The new principals also mentioned challenges they experienced during their involvement in the coaching model. One such challenge was the actual time spent with their coach and other new principals in the program. As in traditional mentoring programs for new principals, coaching requires additional time beyond a set time limit each month. Based on the data gathered from the survey and interviews, most principals felt that the time required to meet with their coaches was insufficient. Despite the fact that the coaches could be reached at any time by phone or e-mail, it was the face-to-face time that was valued by the new principals. As the literature in Chapter II noted, a requirement for a specific number of face-to-face meetings between the new principal and mentor should be established with the emphasis on relationship-building and professional reflection (Alsbury & Hackman, 2006; Brown & Tobis, 2013; Bugbee, 2006; Olson, 2007). However, having a set number of meetings is not meeting the needs of the new principals, according to the data. As Linda noted in her interview: "I could have cashed in all my required meetings in a month. New principals need constant contact and support and not just phone calls."

With regard to meeting with other new principals, time was the main factor. According to the data, the principals felt that the monthly meetings were beneficial, especially with regard to conversing with other new principals and being able to discuss issues they were facing at their school. However, since the new principals already had much on their plates, finding time to communicate with other new principals in the district when they were not in their monthly

meeting was an issue. In their study of a principal mentoring program in Iowa, Alsbury and Hackman (2006) noted that the establishment of networks and relationships between other administrative personnel was of more value to the new principals than additional learning about specific skills. According to the survey, the principals felt that they needed more time to collaborate with peers within the district. Being able to build that rapport with colleagues who were facing similar issues as new principals was important to the Guilford County principals. As Mary stated,

The discussions we [the coach and principal] had in the office and the opportunity to actually visit other schools and talk with the other principals with the coach was beneficial. Being able to sit there and have those conversations and our coach kind of guide us through the conversation was beneficial as we talked about each other's campuses.

Aside from the issues of time to collaborate with the coach and other new principals, the coaching model's focus was an issue, according to the data. Holloway (2004) mentioned that one component of successful mentoring programs is having clear expectations and guidelines for participants. Hall (2008) noted that in order to create an effective mentoring program, all participants must agree upon the definitions, characteristics, and common language of the program. Hall continued to mention that good programs have clearly-set goals and expectations for the new principals and mentors (Hall, 2008). When the coaching model was first put into place, according to the data provided, new principals were not part of designing the program. Even with best

intentions, the creators of the coaching model could not foresee every issue that new principals would be facing in their first year of the principalship. This could account for the disparity between the coaching model directors' purpose of the program and the opinions and experiences of the new principals. As many of the principals indicated, there were many issues they faced that the program did not address, such as how to read a budget, how to deal with Human Resources, or having a set checklist of duties when they first start the job. Some of the principals noted that their coaches could not be of assistance at times due to the fact that the issue they faced was a district matter and the coach was not familiar with the protocol. The principals indicated that asking for help from someone other than their coach made them feel uncomfortable or even inadequate. As Linda mentioned,

In other districts and other counties, people do things differently to support their principals and I just think it's an area that is not talked about a lot because people are made to feel like they're inadequate if you need support.

Most of the principals interviewed noted that the district and the coach need to be supporting them from the first day on the job. With the coaching model's purpose being to support the new principals of Guilford County, the program needs to be ready to support the principals, as one principal stated "when the rubber hits the road on day one." In turn, the new principals need to continually ensure that the program is meeting their needs.

Experience with the Coach

As previously stated in Chapter II, the experience of coaching and whether the experience is beneficial to principals and prepares them for success during their first year relies on the experience with their coach (Bloom, 1999; Hall, 2008; Lee, 2010; Libby, 2010). The interviewed principals were asked about their interactions with their coach, specifically how their coach assisted them with their needs during their time participating in the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model, and their perceived level of success, as the second research question asks. From the data gathered from the interviews, the process of coaching is quite an individualized experience. Since each new principal had their own challenges to face when entering into the principalship, it can stand to reason that no two coaching sessions would be similar amongst all the principals.

However, the overall experience of working with a coach is quite comparable between all the principals. As Holloway (2004) mentioned in the article "Mentoring New Leaders," mentors were ranked as the most crucial component of the program and the success of their principalship. Having someone who is available to talk to in total confidentiality and who comes with a great wealth of knowledge and experience were two of the most common experiences that new principals valued most when discussing their time with their coach. The experience of having someone who is not tied to the school district was most beneficial to the new principals. All of the interviewed principals agreed that being able to discuss issues that they confronted in their job with

someone in a confidential and non-evaluative environment was the most valuable aspect of the program. Many of the principals interviewed stated how they appreciated their coach as a “sounding board” with whom they could discuss a myriad of issues without fear. Bloom (1999), Psnecik (2011), and Reiss (2011) mentioned that the most important factor was the coach’s ability to be available as independent and confidential sounding boards for new administrators as they struggled with a variety of difficult issues in the first year of service.

The study revealed how each coach’s expertise and knowledge were able to guide the new principals through a successful first year. As stated before, coaching is an individualized experience and each coach comes with his/her own strengths. With the coaching model designed to assign a coach to a principal based on the strengths of the coach and the needs of the principal, the principals felt that the pair was a good fit. Most of the principals felt that the experience of their coach really helped them survive their first year as a principal. As the literature in Chapter II discusses, the training that the coaches receive in order to be most effective for new principals trains them how to identify the needs of the principal and then apply the best approach (Bloom et al., 2004; Reiss, 2011). Many of the principals stated that their coaches were able to address most of their needs, either because the coach had experienced it themselves or had resources to meet the need. For example, one principal discussed how his or her coach was able to help improve the school’s guided reading program

because the coach provided resources, such as articles, to help out. Another principal mentioned how his or her coach would walk through scenarios to see how her or she would react in the situation and then give them feedback and suggestions. As Bloom et al. (2004) stated, coaches must be prepared to address all sorts of concerns. The wealth of knowledge and experience the coaches bring to assist in alleviating the issues the new principals face has allowed the principals to determine the course of their coaching.

In addition to the positive experiences each of the new principals had with their respective coaches, the data from the survey and interviews indicated that the coaching model gave them a sense of success during their first year and beyond. Many of the principals described having a “higher level of confidence” and being able to better handle situations, realizing that not all situations require a sense of urgency. Several studies mentioned in Chapter II indicated how many new principals felt that their preparation programs did not adequately prepare them for the principalship (Alsbury & Hackman, 2006; Fox, 2009). As mentioned in the first theme, a few of the principals mentioned that even with some administrative experience, taking on the role of principal was not quite what they had expected. However, most of the interviewed principals noted that without the program and the assistance of their coach, they would have had difficulty surviving their first year. As Lawrence described, “My learning curve was significantly lowered.”

Implications for Practice

The need for school districts to ensure the success of new principals must become a priority during this time in education. The role of a new principal needs to be supported by the school district that he/she serves to make certain the school in which they serve can be successful. To ensure success, school districts must put into place some essential factors that have been discovered during this study. These factors are implications for current practice for school districts wanting to create a coaching model or suggestions for changes for school districts that currently have a model in place. The areas addressed look at time for collaboration, involvement in program planning, and preparation for the principalship.

Time for Collaboration

The lack of time for coaches to meet with new principals was the single most issue the principals had with the coaching model. The new principals felt that the time spent in face-to-face sessions was not enough to meet their needs. Even though it was useful to have the coaches to be available for phone calls or emails, it was the one-on-one meetings that were the most valuable. Coaches were able to see first-hand the daily life of their principals at their schools. They could observe walk-throughs and interact with the staff. For principals that only met their coach once a month for an extended period of time, such as half or the whole day, it served some purpose, but it was not enough according to the

principals. Even those principals who met with their coach bi-weekly for a shorter amount of time felt it was not enough.

Most coaching programs require at least one face-to-face meeting between the coach and principal per month. Often, that is written into the contracts of the coaches. However, at the suggestion of the principals interviewed, they believed that more frequent, but shorter visitations would be the most beneficial. As opposed to once a month for half or the whole day, a weekly visit for a much shorter time is more reasonable for the principals' time. Districts need to be sensitive to the demands of the new principal during their first year and since the relationship between the coach and principal is quite individualized, it should be the coach and principal that determine the need for one-on-one coaching sessions.

Districts should also be considerate of the number of new principals placed with a single coach. Many of the principals noted that due to the number of principals a coach was placed with, time to meet was not always optimal and had to resort to meeting once a month despite the need for more intensive coaching sessions. Unfortunately, the present literature does not discuss the ratio of principals to a coach. However, districts must be considerate of the varying needs of their principals and the demands placed on one coach to assist their principals. This may require districts to hire and train more coaches as the number of new principals with diverse backgrounds increases and the issues that they face increase as well.

Another aspect of a coaching model that school districts need to examine when discussing the time spent between the coach and new principal is the initial meeting between both parties. Some of the principals had indicated that they met their coach shortly after being announced as a principal. Participants in the early years of the coaching model did not receive their coach until after the school year had begun. Despite the disparity between the different years of the coaching model's approach to pairing the coaches with the principals, coaches need to be assigned to their new principal(s) as soon as possible. New principals face enough issues even before students walk through the door at the beginning of the school year. The principals need that support, as one principal put it "before the rubber hits the road."

Involvement in Program Planning

The second implication that emerged from the data involves the program's design. Several of the principals indicated that the help they received from their coach was invaluable; aspects of district matters such as school budgets or human resources could not be navigated due to the coach being unfamiliar with district protocol. Data also showed that the new principal meetings were important in terms of collaborating with other new principals; however, those meetings could have been better designed with current needs of the principals in mind. For example, one principal mentioned having a session or sessions that taught the principals how to handle particular situations, such as an issue with a teacher that affects new principals. With the new principals suggesting that they

needed better training with specific items such as budgets and teacher evaluations, it stands to reason that new principals or even recently former new principals should participate in part of the planning process since they would be the most knowledgeable about what training or resources they need from the program to be successful.

Preparation for the Principalship

As discussed in Chapters II and IV, many principals felt that their previous experience of coursework and administrative experience did not properly prepare them for stepping into the principalship. The first year of principalship is unique to each new principal despite whatever training and experience they bring with them, but the job of the principal is one for which no one can be completely prepared. To alleviate some of the “sink or swim” attitude new principals often face when starting the job, it should be the duty of the school district to prepare possible principals as best as possible.

With the suggestion of several of the principals, especially those who did not have a coach assigned to them until school started, having a general checklist of things that should be done and when they should be done would be quite helpful. Many of the principals mentioned how when they first started the job, they had so much that had to be accomplished immediately. In addition, they had to rely on other district principals for information such as what items for the district were due when and what they should be working on at this time of the year. The principals did mention that this was most crucial in the summer before

school started since that is when they were hired. It was also suggested that if possible, the coach would be present to assist with going through the items that needed to be done.

Recommendations for Future Studies

With the need to improve or create support systems for new principals coming not only from school districts but higher education and governments, mentoring and coaching programs have become valuable resources in preparing principals for the rigors of the principalship. Future studies of coaching programs could focus on the experiences of the coaches. Since most of the available research focuses on the principals, their needs, and experiences, looking into what the coach experiences during the time of coaching would be invaluable. By focusing on the coaches, studies could research best practices used by the coaches during coaching for new principals and analyze the other side of the coach-new principal relationship.

Researcher's Reflections

Support in the form of mentoring or coaching has been part of the induction and success plan for beginning teachers for many years. For beginning principals, however, this has not been the case until recently. I have been interested in the topic of support for beginning principals for several years since a very successful assistant principal with whom I worked took on the principalship and ultimately was not successful and was removed from the

position in less than one school year. This incident caused me to start asking questions in my mind such as:

- What did the system do to support this new principal?
- What could the system have done to support this new principal before this incident occurred in an effort to prevent it?
- What will the system do in the future to help new principals avoid this type of situation?

These questions and others led me to an interest in this topic and my research for this dissertation. I have learned much about mentoring and coaching programs for new principals and have had an opportunity to reflect on what I believe a successful, meaningful coaching program should include for beginning principals. I have also had an opportunity to learn a lot about myself through this process, both as a leader and as a person. I completed all of my degree programs in a face-to-face setting where I attended classes with live professors and other students in class with me rather than online or in some other format. This is what works best for me as a learner so that I gain the most from the program. The dissertation phase, however, is a lonely one that requires more self-discipline than I had, at times. This process has been a long and involved one with many ups and downs as well as times of optimism and times of self-doubt that I would reach the point where I am now. To that end, I suggest to anyone entering this process the following:

1. Pick a topic that you love as you will spend a lot of your time with it.
2. Devise a plan, especially a timeline, and stick to it very closely.
3. Have support in place for yourself throughout the process. You will need cheerleaders pushing you on to complete the project.
4. Celebrate small successes along the way. A chapter done, a set of interviews completed, or any other step in the journey is a completed step in the journey and should be celebrated.

This dissertation journey has solidified my belief that beginning principals need support in the form of coaching as they begin a very demanding job that at times feels very thankless, overwhelming, lonely and, “undoable.” Fortunately, we are seeing more and more of these types of programs in school districts to support beginning principals and, just like with many things, Guilford County Schools is on the cutting edge and for that I say . . . great work.

Although I learned many things while completing this research, there are a few that stand out as clear needs where a mentoring and/or coaching program for new principals is concerned. It is extremely important that a relationship of trust and confidentiality be established and honored from the start. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways. The first way is to employ coaches who are not in any way, past or present, affiliated with the school system for which the principal works. This is important because the principal needs to feel comfortable sharing their real experiences with the coach who supports them in a non-evaluative role. This is also important because a relationship of trust will

allow the principal to gain solid advice and guidance from the coach so that he or she improves their practice, as this is the goal of a mentoring or coaching program. Another important aspect of a successful coaching program is the availability of time for the principal and coach to spend together in an environment where the principal is comfortable. Throughout my research, I heard multiple times that the principal would have benefitted from having access to the coach during the summer leading up to their first year on the job rather than starting in September, which was typically the case for this model. I also learned that principals could have benefitted from more time with the mentor in the form of more time during the monthly face-to-face meetings with the coach and a second year of participation, once the second year of coaching was removed. The principals in the beginning years of the program enjoyed the benefits of two years of coaching and were very positive about that fact. Principals who benefitted from the coaching program in the past couple of years would have been open to a second year, thereby doubling the amount of support they received. The final thing that stands out in my mind has to do with the way in which the coach interacted with the principal. It became very clear that the coaches who showed up for the meetings with his or her mentee with a small agenda and still had ample time for the agenda of the principal were viewed in the most positive way. The principal role is a lonely one, at best. There is no one in a school with whom the principal can share all thoughts, ideas, and struggles. The coach, when open to such a method of meeting with the principal,

can be that person. This is extremely important as principals often need another set of eyes on a situation, especially a set of eyes with a fresh perspective, because the coach does not work in the school or school system. In short, the most important parts of a coaching program, as evidenced through this research, centers around trust, time, and the willingness of the coach to allow the principal ample time to share his or her thoughts, ideas, struggles, and needs. The Guilford County Schools program did so for the principals involved in the program.

Unfortunately, the coaching program for new principals within Guilford County Schools was collapsed at the beginning of the 2014/2015 school year. Interestingly, this happened at about the same time a powerful article was released in *Educational Administration Quarterly* that speaks to the need for such a program to support principals as they begin and navigate through the early timeframe of the principalship, focusing on one cohort of new principals working in Chicago Public Schools. Authors James P. Spillane and Linda C. Lee refer to the experience during the first three months on the job for new principals as “reality shocks” where taking on their new found responsibilities are concerned and call those months “critical” in the development of these novices.

Whether it is new principals in Chicago Public Schools, Guilford County Schools or any other school system, the job of principal is a tough one given the constant onslaught of demands...parents, mandates, student discipline, test scores, graduation rates and the list goes on and on. Most principals were

teachers first, assistant principals second and then took the top seat and while the previous two positions prepared them in some ways for the job, they did not in many other ways and new principals need support in order to have any hope of success. Funding is an issue. We all accept that. However, it is my firm belief that we must prioritize where our limited funds are to be spent during these tough budget times and I would advocate for some of that money being spent on a coaching program like the one I studied in Guilford County Schools. It has been stated many times that the principal is a key factor in the success or non-success of a school, that the principal impacts the school community, the teaching and learning in the building, the moral of the teachers and others connected with the school. I agree 100% with these statements. These statements are also why I say that Guilford County Schools must find a way to reinstate this coaching program for the benefit of the new principals, teachers, other school employees, parents, the community as a whole and most importantly, students. I cannot think of a better way to spend some of the limited funds to ultimately ensure that school principals can make a positive impact within the school to which they are assigned. A successful principal, when supported, can lead a school to great heights.

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APPENDIX A

SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. My participation in the GCS coaching model helped me succeed as a new principal.
2. My coach was available when I needed assistance.
3. The GCS coaching model on having a clear sense of direction.
4. The GCS coaching model encouraged me to be a team player with other principals in my district.
5. The amount of time spent in coaching sessions with the GCS coaching model was appropriate.
6. The GCS coaching model is set up so that people of diverse backgrounds can succeed.
7. I felt free to ask questions of my coach without fear of embarrassment (or negative consequences).
8. The GCS coaching model encouraged me to come up with new and better ways of doing things.
9. The coaching model was set up/arranged/laid out in a way that was easy to understand.
10. Because of my GCS coaching interaction, I have a clear understanding of what is expected of me as a principal and how to be successful.
11. The GCS model educated me on making “the right” decisions based on the needs of the students.
12. My coach was willing to openly discuss and solve problems with me.
13. The GCS coaching model allows me the ability to use my own judgment in getting the job done.
14. My coach provided sufficient input into work related decisions.
15. I felt empowered by my coach to better serve my school.
16. I feel that my coaching experience provided me with the necessary information and resources to effectively do my job.
17. Because of the GCS coaching model, I understand how my role as principal fits in with other areas of my school.
18. The GCS coaching model gave me timely and ongoing coaching and feedback regarding my performance.
19. When changes in the program are made, the communications are handled well (sufficient notice is given, credible explanation as to reasons it give, etc.)
20. I feel that the GCS coaching model strives for excellence in all aspects of educating children.
21. I feel that the GCS coaching model on being focuses on providing support for what children need to be successful.
22. Overall, I was pleased with the GCS coaching model.
23. My coach allowed me to continuously learn and adapt to new situations.

- 24. I feel that the GCS coaching model is innovative (seeking to develop and use new ideas, products, processes, operating methods, etc.).
- 25. I feel that the GCS coaching model was effectively managed and well run.
- 26. My coach and I worked well together.
- 27. The GCS coaching model motivated me to go above and beyond in completing my responsibilities.
- 28. The GCS coaching model closely related information provided with the daily tasks I am required to accomplish.
- 29. Overall, I am satisfied with the training (classroom, web, print materials etc) provided by the GCS coaching model.

1 – Strongly Disagree, 2 – Disagree, 3 – Neutral, 4 – Agree and 5 – Strongly Agree

APPENDIX B

PRINCIPAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. When you hear the word coaching, what do you think of?
2. What were or are your biggest challenges as a novice principal?
3. How did the coaching that you experienced help/assist you with these challenges?
4. How soon after starting your job as a principal were you introduced to your coach?
5. What kinds of support did/do you receive from your coach?
6. Where did/do you meet with your coach and do you feel that the meeting location influenced/influences your experience with your coach?
7. How much time did/does your coach spend with you?
8. Was there anything that your coach did consistently at each meeting that you felt was beneficial?
9. What did/do you do differently as a result of coaching?
10. What aspects of coaching did/do you find most beneficial?
11. What aspects of coaching did/do you find least beneficial?
12. Do you feel that coaching has prepared you for success as a principal?
13. Is there anything that you would recommend to make coaching more beneficial for future novice principals?
14. Is there anything that I didn't ask that you that you would like to share in reference to your coaching experience?

APPENDIX C

COACHING DIRECTOR INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What year or years were you in charge of the coaching program?
2. What do you perceive as the purpose of coaching for novice principals?
3. What was the basic plan for coaching during the year or years you were in charge of it?
4. How were the coaches chosen/hired?
5. Who evaluated the coaches?
6. On what terms were the coaches evaluated?
7. How were the coaches matched with the novice principals?
8. How were the coaches and novice principals introduced to each other?
9. What were the qualifications of the coaches?
10. Were there documents in place for the coaching program (contracts, timelines, etc.)?
11. Were novice principals given the opportunity to provide feedback regarding their experience with coaching?
12. Do you feel that the coaching program was an effective one?
13. What could have been added to or taken away from the coaching program to make it more effective?
14. Is there anything else you would like to share with me that I didn't ask you?

APPENDIX D

SIGNIFICANT STATEMENTS WITH THEIR FORMULATED MEANINGS

Significant Phrases or Sentences and Their Formulated Meanings	
<i>Significant Phrase or Sentence</i>	<i>Formulated Meaning</i>
<p>Interview Question #1</p> <p>When I hear the word “coaching” I think of the relationship between individuals or a team and a coach where the specific needs of either the team or individual are addressed.</p> <p>That coach is supposed to identify and be able to look at what that person or that team needs and then steer their guidance towards that goal.</p> <p>A teacher, trainer, buddy.</p> <p>Someone you can rely on, somebody that you could go to and somebody that is going to give you some honest feedback. Good or bad.</p> <p>Somebody that has your best interest and is wanting you to become better and so they’re, even those areas where they see you need some refinement, the spin that they put on it is very positive.</p> <p>Someone who can help model, serve as a guide.</p> <p>I think of a mentor, someone who will look at my practice, look at what I am doing and guide me, who will give me corrective feedback, if there’s something I am clearly making wrong decisions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This what coaching means to this principal. It is what a coach should be doing. • The job of the coach. What they should be doing. • What a coach is. • What a coach should be doing for a new principal. • Coaches have the new principal’s best interest and want to see them succeed. • What a coach should do. • What a coach should be doing.

Significant Phrases or Sentences and Their Formulated Meanings	
<i>Significant Phrase or Sentence</i>	<i>Formulated Meaning</i>
<p>about, as in, like if you're playing a sport, if you're not practicing certain things the right way, you would give me guidance and feedback.</p> <p>I think active support, I think of advocacy, I think of guidance, I think of mentorship, I think of being pushed, encouraged, redirected, things like that.</p> <p>Someone who not only teaches but supports an effort of an individual or team of individuals and is kind of the person who keeps everybody glued together in a team concept or in an individual concept, helps that person maximize their talents or skill set.</p> <p>I consider that a mentor-type role, someone who's going to guide me through, point me out, someone I can be honest with, someone that I can share my thoughts with and also someone who's going to be there to help me when I need them to help me with whatever the situation can be.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What coaching means. • What coaching means. • What coaching means.
<p>Interview Question #2</p> <p>My biggest challenge is time management, keeping up with emails and tasks that need to be done.</p> <p>Navigating the principalship. Hardest thing is balancing the different parts of the principalship and not letting one [managerial, instructional, political] drop because you're focusing so much on the other.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenge as a new principal • Having the balancing act down as a new principal

Significant Phrases or Sentences and Their Formulated Meanings	
<i>Significant Phrase or Sentence</i>	<i>Formulated Meaning</i>
I didn't have as much structure as I would like to have had coming into my first principalship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation into becoming a principal.
I didn't feel I got some of the needed exposure that I wish I had as an AP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation into becoming a principal. Recommendation for AP training?
So often a big part of the job is having to follow up on those responsibilities that you gave other people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job responsibilities.
One of my biggest challenges has been, just the juggling.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new principal having difficulty adjusting to all the jobs that a principal does.
Another significant challenge has been overhead and learning how to balance my interaction, my time, and the energy that I spend toward them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balancing act. Knowing what time and energy to put into what task.
Turning around a low performing school and focusing on a community and staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biggest challenge. One that is difficult even for established principals.
Time is always a challenge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balance for time and energy.
Recognizing and actively addressing teachers that are below standard.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to help those teachers that are not up to par with what they should be doing and communicating that with them.
Wanting to get the full picture of what's going on, trying to work with people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trying to understand every aspect
I think the biggest challenge is we're dealing with everything that comes at you at one time and knowing how to prioritize what's important, what needs to be taken	

Significant Phrases or Sentences and Their Formulated Meanings	
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<p>care of right now, what can be put on the back burner for a bit.</p> <p>Because I was doing everything, and when I say everything, I mean everything from the time you open the door until the last person that closes the building, and that's not a new story for administrators but for a new principal, never having been told that, you know, it was just a huge challenge that first year in trying to navigate where to go, who to go to, how to do it.</p>	
<p>Interview Question #3</p> <p>The one thing I really appreciated was that in any relationship you have with people, and this is my personal belief, it feels, it serves some purpose, okay, so the purpose of our relationship became what I, I was lacking at that time and I didn't have anybody to talk to, you know.</p> <p>She encouraged me a lot and just saying 'look, you're doing better than you know, she was a confidence booster because there is nobody in this field who sincerely pats you on your back.</p> <p>She could see me in action.</p> <p>My coach, she helped boost me up, the things that she would always say, you've got what you do, you're already prepared, you just got to believe you can do it.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The creation of a beneficial, trusting relationship with the coach when there was no one to turn to. • Encouragement from the coach. • Coach interacted with principal at the school and saw what they were doing. • Encouragement & self-esteem boost by the coach.

Significant Phrases or Sentences and Their Formulated Meanings	
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My coach was really a good listener and was really good at asking the right questions for me to help me, she never really told me what to do and she didn't really give me the answers but she would listen and she would ask questions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach listened. Good questioner so that the principal would be able to figure out the solution.
She was available when I needed her.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of coach.
She did provide some suggestions and things that she thought might be helpful.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance of coach.
It gave me that person to go toward if I needed someone to sit down and confide in, however, I didn't feel out selected in what I talked with them about, but that person was very instrumental in helping me out when I needed help.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidentiality. Listening skills of the coach. Ability to talk about anything. Openness of conversations.
Being able to meet with the other participants that are also the new principals in that coaching model was very beneficial because we had an opportunity to meet once a month after school hours and getting together, being able to share that model along with our coaches sometimes and sometimes not, that whole model I felt was what we needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration with other new principals. Networking.
Having that coach show me where I need assistance, kind of give me like that middle person, helping me with the resources that I need to answer whatever problem or whatever question that I had.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance from the coach. Knowledgeable resource.
My coach had experience with turning around low performing schools and also	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of the coach.

Significant Phrases or Sentences and Their Formulated Meanings	
<i>Significant Phrase or Sentence</i>	<i>Formulated Meaning</i>
<p>had experience with dealing with challenging communities so he provided an excellent amount of resources.</p> <p>My coach, she has been very affirming.</p> <p>Every meeting starts off with, I've got some preliminary things, I've got things penciled in that we could talk about, but I really care about what you want to talk about, I really care about what's on your mind, what's been a point of frustration or what's been a challenge since the last time we talked.</p> <p>She's really open and usually I would share with her difficult situations or challenges and kind of run through it just to get her insight to see if I could have handled something differently or if I'm headed down the right path or if I'm thinking right about something.</p> <p>She's been helpful in that regard, assisting with real life, specific, situational things.</p> <p>She was available anytime I needed her and always had a positive, if I called her with what, in my first year is what I thought was crisis, she just talked me through it and made me understand.</p> <p>It's just the fact that she was always there, she met when we needed to, we could always find time.</p> <p>Just having that sounding board,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-esteem boost from coach. • Expectations of coaching. The coaching wanting to hear about what is happening with the principal and the principal leading the conversation, not the coach. • Being able to run through issues with coach. Situational coaching. • Just being there to support principal. • Availability of coach. • Availability of coach. • Listening skills of the coach. Being able to explain what is happening and

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<i>Significant Phrase or Sentence</i>	<i>Formulated Meaning</i>
<p>somebody with the experience that could come in when you're in the middle of a situation or you had a situation the day before or previously, you could email or call them, they can kind of walk you through the process, maybe share a similar experience with you, share some steps that they would take, not necessarily say, "this is what I would do" but if in the position, this is how I would navigate it.</p> <p>Wealth of experience.</p> <p>One thing that my coach did was just sort of give me permission to address what I need to address.</p> <p>It's interesting when we talk through what I'm struggling with him and being able to give feedback that really does relate because he's been there before.</p>	<p>them interpreting it and helping out.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge that coach brings. • Openness of conversations with the coach. • Openness of conversations with the coach. Being able to talk about anything that is happening.
<p>Interview Question #4</p> <p>I was named as principal in late June. I started July 1 and I think that I was introduced, maybe in September so a couple of months later.</p> <p>It might have been a good idea, actually, to have worked with him over the summer, just because there wasn't a lot of guidance over the summer.</p> <p>It was during the summer and it was in July and I want to say it was about the third week on the job. I think I started with her early August so it was just a</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to coach was 2 months after principal started. • Program recommendation. Starting coaches earlier. • Introduction to coach was 1 ½ months after starting the job.

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<i>Significant Phrase or Sentence</i>	<i>Formulated Meaning</i>
<p>month, maybe a month and a half, maybe a month afterwards.</p> <p>Might be a little unique, my coach happened to be my former principal's coach, when I was an AP.</p> <p>I met my coach, I want to say, August, about the first or second week of August before I started the school year and I think we had just an informal meeting and I think we had our first formal coaching session in September.</p> <p>I would say almost immediately during the first summer work phase when hired in July, that summer we had a workshop and we were automatically assigned our coaches and it was very quickly I would say, within the first couple of weeks of being appointed a principal.</p> <p>I want to say it was about a month.</p> <p>It had to be at least by September. We started school in August so it had to at least be by September.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior training/preparation • Introduction to coach was 1 month after starting the job. Coaching didn't start until September. • Introduction to coach was almost immediate after hiring. • Introduction to coach was 1 month after starting. • Introduction to coach was after school started.
<p>Interview Question #5</p> <p>Mainly being able to work through the upcoming events so we would always go through what's on the radar.</p> <p>Being able to talk through problems at hand.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy worked on with the coach. • Conversations with coach about what is happening now.

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<p>Lots of feedback.</p> <p>I received a lot of instruction.</p> <p>A lot of instructional support, how to help instruction, how to help that struggling teacher, how to identify some of the things when I would go in and do a walk through or go in for an observation, and giving that quick feedback. Giving that feedback as quickly as possible.</p> <p>One of the things I really struggled, and I still struggle with, is being that big cheerleader type and just making sure I was taking care of my teachers and making sure I was just doing some of the little things that I would not have thought of that.</p> <p>A lot of it is dialogue, she sends a weekly leadership minute, email, it's not anything real deep, but just, you know, a particular piece regarding leadership she knows very broad.</p> <p>She'll do walk-throughs with me.</p> <p>She's just another set of eyes and she'll give me feedback on my input in the meeting or my role in the meeting or input with other participants within the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows principal to reflect on what is going on around them and gauge how they are doing. • Allows coach to assist in areas that the principal might be deficient. • Coaching on how to understand what is happening in the school, how to deal with teachers, understand the power of communication with teachers. • Learning about the power of school morale and being there to support the needs of the school. Being there for the staff and students. Being encouraging. • Coach keeping principals up-to-date with current happenings in the principalship. • Learning to observe what is happening in a classroom, in the school. • Critical feedback so the principal can reflect upon what they are doing.

Significant Phrases or Sentences and Their Formulated Meanings	
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<p>meeting and just kind of critique and share insight.</p> <p>Another thing that she does with our new principal meetings that occur every month, she and the other coaches join us for the majority of those meetings.</p> <p>He was very effective. He would come and walk the halls with me. He would walk in classrooms and do observations, just walk through observations with me, he would bring articles about things that were new and cutting edge as far as the principalship and leadership. He would also talk me through several different perspectives in dealing with the problems that I was dealing with from his past experience and from experiences that he was aware of that he had either been a part of or had knowledge of. He would also be there occasionally for a phone call on the way home.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration with the other coaches and new principals. Building rapport. • Coach learning about the school. Giving feedback about what they see in the principal's school. Providing resources. Availability of the coach.
<p>Interview Question #6</p> <p>We'd meet in my office. It's been good to be in my office, I can put my hands on things quickly when we've gone over certain documents.</p> <p>We met here at the school, like I said, once a month, and while we were here, we walked the building together. What I liked is my coach didn't wait on me. My coach would get out and visit my building, learn my staff, learn from my students, so could provide me on some feedback that they saw without me and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting for coaching session. More conducive to needs of principal. • During coaching sessions, coach would meet @ principal's school and walk the school with them. Learn about the school. See what is happening. Gaining insight into the happenings of the school.

Significant Phrases or Sentences and Their Formulated Meanings	
<i>Significant Phrase or Sentence</i>	<i>Formulated Meaning</i>
<p>then provide me with feedback on things they saw in the building that we saw together.</p> <p>We met, sometimes they came here, sometimes, but oftentimes it was off campus. Any place that we met I felt like I had their undivided attention and we were there for one reason and one reason only and it didn't matter where we met.</p> <p>We would meet at the school. I don't know that it had a significant impact at all as far as how that coaching experienced turned out, but I do think that he was able to see that the issues that I was facing were very different in some aspects from what he experienced.</p> <p>We met in my office.</p> <p>The majority of the time we met here on my campus. She would come into my school and my coach was always familiar with my school and my staff. She was very comfortable with coming here, we'd walk around the building, on occasion we would meet downtown [Washington Street].</p> <p>We met here at the office. For me it was a good location because first of all it was without any other administrative support, I needed to be here.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mutual meeting places. Sometimes at school, sometimes off campus to meet the principal's needs. Listening skills of the coach. • Coach giving a different viewpoint about what they see happening in the school. Ability to give constructive feedback to principal. • Where coach/principal met. Easy access to what would be needed for meeting. • Coach meeting at the school helped them learn about the school and becoming familiar with it. • Meeting @ school was beneficial for the principal since the demands of their time needed them to be at the school.

Significant Phrases or Sentences and Their Formulated Meanings	
<i>Significant Phrase or Sentence</i>	<i>Formulated Meaning</i>
<p>We met here. We met at my school. We just talked in the office with her kind of explaining what her role was and me talking about it. She would come back a few times where we actually would go visit some classrooms.</p> <p>I think the location for me did matter, because she got to see sitting in my office how frequently the phone would ring, how frequently people would knock on the door, so that kind of helped with the conversation and she gave me a couple of tricks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaching expectations. Conducted walkthroughs and could discuss what was happening. • Coaching sessions being held at the school allowed the coach to see all that the principal was dealing with. Helpful resources and knowledge of the coach.
<p>Interview Question #7</p> <p>An hour and a half every two weeks or twice a month.</p> <p>The days that we were on my campus, my coach was here pretty much all of the school day. Easily between 8-11 hours a month.</p> <p>Certainly my first year, I saw a lot more of her. I saw her at least once a week, and when we would meet, we would meet for an hour. There might be times when she would come and she may stay a whole afternoon or a whole morning.</p> <p>She does two hour visits. We started off bi-weekly, and now its monthly but then we also see each other in our monthly new principal meetings and then she is always a phone call away; she's always an email away and she'll always come if I need her.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Met twice a month for ½ day. • Met once or twice a month. Full days at the school. • Met every week, but only for an hour. Coach/principal decided on when meeting was needed and the length of time for that meeting. • Started twice a month, but is now once a month. Visits were two hours long.

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<p>It was a full hour if not more. I want to say, at times it would last an hour and a half, sometimes two hours just depending on what he had going on and what I had going on.</p> <p>A good bit of time I would say, on a typical day she would spend anywhere from about three hours with me.</p> <p>Typically, an hour, an hour and a half.</p> <p>At least an hour that first six or seven months.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings were at least an hour or two. No mention of times met during a month. • Meetings were about 3 hours. No mention of times met during a month. • 1 to 1 ½ hour meetings. Times met during month? • 1 hour each month.
<p>Interview Question #8</p> <p>Probably the most beneficial thing he does for me is the looking ahead.</p> <p>There are times that things come up that I haven't even thought of so it helps for me to talk it out with him and then I can bring it to my admin team, my leadership team, now I think sometimes when you're near you don't realize, you don't always know what you're missing because you haven't walked the road yet.</p> <p>We always started with kind of just playing back events that may have taken place while we were away from each other.</p> <p>She was always encouraging. She was extremely positive but also very honest.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach is able to help with planning and seeing the road ahead. • Coaching being able to see the bigger picture and helping the principal realize it. Coach being able to see the road ahead. • Coaching giving feedback on events so principal can reflect on what happened and move forward from there. • Self-esteem boost from coach. Knowing the principal can do the job.

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One wonderful thing I felt about the coach was I was never worried, it was like, if you have a colleague in the system, you're not always comfortable talking with them because you're afraid whatever you say to them might get back to whomever.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good support system with coach. Trust and confidence that the principal has in the coach. Openness of conversations.
I always felt very confident that whatever we were discussing, it would go no further than our conversation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidentiality and trust of coach.
We talked about what she thinks that she had done in her time as a principal that a lot of it was things that I would try with my new staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience coach brings. Able to use strategies to lead school.
She's good at being affirming and she's good at being very descriptive in her feedback.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good feedback from coach. Giving principal self-esteem boost so they know they are doing a good job.
She helps give me a pulse for where I should be in my first year based on her experience which is really good.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach gives good feedback so principal understands what is going on around them.
Just really solid feedback and I would dialogue about the feedback is always really good, because she's even, she's open even with the feedback that she provides.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from coach is good so principal can learn from it.
I think he always had what I saw as upcoming challenging as he always asked, he always kept me thinking through questioning and through articles about two to three months down the road.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being able to talk through upcoming issues with the coach and figure out together the best option(s) to pursue.
He would always help me refocus on	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of time. Learning to focus on the little things that can slip

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<p>some of the little things. He always helped me focus sometimes on not so much the big picture, which I would get, but sometimes the little picture.</p> <p>She would ask me how things were going.</p> <p>I liked the fact that I could start our meeting off by not necessarily venting but sharing any concerns that I had.</p> <p>She was a good listener.</p> <p>She always started and ended with “How are you doing?” ‘What went well?’ And she would always end with, ‘You’re doing a good job. Even on your worse day, you better believe you’re doing a good job.’</p> <p>She helped me that first year understand my schedule. We actually made out a schedule like we made out a daily schedule.</p> <p>Just being around somebody who understood where you were coming from and then having permission from somebody to be normal, be human, take care of human needs and still do your job which I think, of course.</p> <p>Being a first year principal you know eyes are all on you so you’re trying to keep a good face up.</p>	<p>through the cracks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach just understanding what is going on around the principal. • Principal being able to be open with the coach. • Coach just listening to the concerns of the principal. • Coach trying to gauge what is happening, what the principal is doing/not doing, and giving reassurance. • Principal learning time management. • The understanding of the coach. Understanding the principal’s situation and being open and honest with them. <p>Principal learning to accept the role they are now in.</p>

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<p>Interview Question #9</p> <p>I probably have done a lot differently, but think that there have been a few instances that I needed to know how to handle certain personnel issues and I don't think I would have been too heavy-handed or too light-handed but there's a difference in going forth with confidence and so even though almost all of those situations I was, you know, within the proper range, you know, I kind of had the right ideas already.</p> <p>The affirmation that you're on the right track.</p> <p>One of the things my coach taught me was really listening.</p> <p>Just kind of helping me work through not needing to do that all the time.</p> <p>I think it helped me to be more patient with individuals.</p> <p>She made me realize, you know, a lot of the stuff that you have to do has to be done on your own time.</p> <p>When you are in your building, you are not in your office.</p> <p>You have to put the teachers first, the kids first, and she also taught me a lot about being a [] person for the school.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaching helped with understanding on how to handle different situations and being able to gauge what is happening. • Confirmation that principal was doing the right thing. • Principal becoming a better listener due to coaching. • Principal learning when to put in the time to understand things. • Principal learning listening skills from coaching. • Principal learning to balance time and understand that school time is when they need to present. • Staff and students need to see the principal. • Understanding priorities. Putting teachers and students first when decisions are made.

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I think I'm able to process my role a bit more thoroughly in some cases. I'm able to consider some pieces that I may have considered but I'm able to consider but I'm able to consider with a little bit more depth, with a little bit more insight now.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being a better reflectioner. Being able to assess better what is going on and what has happened to be more effective.
I think what I did oftentimes is I would reflect a little bit more. You're going so hard and so fast you forget to reflect because you're just going a million miles an hour and you don't have any downtime and that time I would spend with him would be more reflection than anything and that was always beneficial because, like I said, you're going, going, going.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being able to reflect on what is happening in the building. Building in time to reflect upon what is going on.
It helped me become much more of a reflective practitioner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being more reflective in the practice.
I think I viewed doing certain things like walkthroughs differently, having her walk with me and kind of expressing this is something you might want to look for as a new principal, and this was during the first month or so that we met.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning to see the big picture when completing walkthroughs. Seeing what you might be missing.
She reminded me of things I was doing right.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued encouragement to remember they were doing things right.
She helped me with understanding the culture of the school and remembering I acknowledge my teachers differently.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal learning to understand the makeup of the staff and student body.

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Just putting systems in place at the beginning to make sure there was a different process for everything.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal learning to simplify school practices so one person is not doing everything.
You can't be everything to everybody all the time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning to balance time and energy.
Interview Question #10	
I think just being able to talk through the struggles I'm having at the time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Openness of conversations between coach and principal.
He'll ask questions, good mentors do that and he'll ask questions that just make me think through a couple of different angles and sometimes those questions challenge me to think more deeply about what true effects is this going to have on learning and things.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach reflecting on what the principal is doing and questioning how the principal is doing things to get the principal to think critically and reflect on what is going on.
The feedback was beneficial.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach's feedback helped the principal.
Being able to sit there and have those conversations and our coach kind of guide us through the conversation was beneficial as we talked about each other's campuses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration with other new principals and being able to share what is happening at their schools and get feedback from the other principals.
Just having somebody outside of the system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach has no evaluative authority and ties to the county.
I never felt like anything that I asked whether it seemed like, silly, to me, there was nothing that I ever asked that I felt bad about asking, or embarrassed to ask her.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Openness of conversations with coach. Ability to discuss anything the principal needed.
I'm comfortable in my relationship with my coach because I feel free to be	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Openness, confidentiality and trust between coach and principal.

Significant Phrases or Sentences and Their Formulated Meanings	
<i>Significant Phrase or Sentence</i>	<i>Formulated Meaning</i>
transparent because I trust the confidentiality.	
I'd say the support and just the general support of knowing that somebody else has gone through that and this is what they have gone through but also just having somebody to talk to that could provide insight on things that were going to come down the road that you may not see coming down the road.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of the coach helped the principal through what they were experiencing and the coach being able to relate to that. Learning to see down the road.
Being able to give me a little bit of foresight.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning to see the road ahead instead of the "right now."
Having her come to my site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach would come to the school and see the environment of the principal.
Helping me, giving me ideas on how things should go, how things have gone, that was most beneficial to me, just knowing that she knew the culture and the climate that I was working with.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wealth of information. Being able to be reflective with the principal. Understanding the environment of the school.
One of the key things too is that she was available as someone who wasn't tied to the school system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-authoritative position of the coach.
I could say something without fear of judgment or fear that it was going to get back to somebody and that my job would be in jeopardy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidence and trust between the coach and principal.
The conversations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having someone to talk to that had experience.

Significant Phrases or Sentences and Their Formulated Meanings	
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<p>Interview Question #11</p> <p>Sometimes I feel like we could have spent more time on what are the particulars of your situation that are factors that kind of steer it one way or the other and trying to learn more about my situation at hand instead of telling stories about prior experiences that he's had.</p> <p>I wish we had more time with our coach. I wish I'd had a coach my second year.</p> <p>I think the time aspect is what hurts the most.</p> <p>I didn't gain much of it in my second year. The coaches had even more people, and the time that I saw them was much less frequent and just not, in my mind, effective. It almost got to the point where I was dreading them having to come out.</p> <p>Probably the instructional leadership piece.</p> <p>I didn't care for the model where she would come in and we would sit in my office for x amount of time. That's a lot of time that I really didn't have to spend with, you know, sitting there, recapping what I've done.</p> <p>I tried to use her to my benefit while she was here so that I could kill two birds with one stone. I didn't want to go to the meeting even after sometimes we'd meet</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus more on what is happening to the principal instead of the coach explaining how they handled the situation. • Program recommendation: more time for principals and coaches. • Not enough time for coaches and principals to collaborate. • Evaluation of program during the second year that principals had coaches. • Focus on topics pertinent to the principal. • Better planning (time wise) for when the coach and principal meet. • Better collaboration for time between the coach and principal.

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<p>after hours, although I appreciated them, but sometimes just knowing that another meeting because you were overwhelmed with meetings.</p> <p>I needed her more, as much as I appreciated the listening I also felt like there could have been more conversations around, let's walk around, let's look at academics, let's look at teaching, let me give you some guidance on how to talk to a teacher when their performance is not good.</p> <p>For me, the classroom visit piece. I guess those kinds of evaluation pieces of what to look for, that's not something I needed so we very quickly.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach needed to learn more about the school the principal was working so to address the needs of the principal. • Better selection of topics to go over with the principals. Topics should pertain to what the principal needs.
<p>Interview Question #12</p> <p>I think it's a good, a really good support system.</p> <p>It's important. I think at any field that you're in is to have somebody who has been there before and can help you out as you are entering into a new profession. I really do think it helped me.</p> <p>Every first year principal should have that experience with a good coach. It gives you confidence that I think you often, a lot of folks often don't have, and especially for me coming out, I just wasn't as confidence as I would have like to have been in my first year and so having my coach was huge.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall impression of the coaching program. • Feels that coaching is important to the success of new principals. Felt the program was beneficial. • Coaching helped with building confidence that the principal could do the job. All new principals should have a coach.

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<p>The entire time she was here we were solving problems, we were out in the building, we were talking through things, strategizing planning for things that were coming up.</p> <p>I would say it was a benefit.</p> <p>I don't know if it prepared for success, I think it did give me an advantage over people who may have not been coached because, and obviously that has a lot to do with the coach itself and if you have a good coach that's one of those benefits.</p> <p>It made me more successful.</p> <p>I think the purpose of coaching could prepare someone for a positive experience.</p> <p>I think it helped. In the areas of dealing with the culture of the school, helping to prioritize a little bit and realize sometimes just because some things may seem like a 911 case, it's not.</p> <p>If anybody asks me what would have been a better coaching style or model, I would have said we needed to have some time before school starts to talk through these things and not kind of a pill or a bandaid after the illness or the cut or what have you but having coaching time ahead of, before school starts.</p> <p>I'm just saying if people want to go in a direction to be supportive of new</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constant feedback from coach to make the principal better to make them better leaders for their school. • Felt program was worth the time. • Felt that coaching gave them an advantage over those who did not have one. Gave them an "inside track" to the principalship. • Felt coaching helped them. • Felt the program was worth the time and investment. • Helped principal understand the school (staff, students and community). Helped with prioritizing issues and realize that not everything is an issue. • Coaching needs to start before the school year starts. • Organizational meeting at the very beginning of the coaching process

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principals, I just think it needs to be something organized that handles [], you know and just having time to process all that's about to take place.	with all principals and coaches to go over expectations of the program.
<p>Interview Question #13</p> <p>I think the main things we're looking for is how to handle our particular situations so, I'm not sitting with others in their meetings but I think a common thread I do hear about is just being able to solve the problems that are in your building.</p> <p>Being able to have your coach accessible to you a little bit more, maybe devoted to you a little bit more.</p> <p>To have more coaches and can really devote the time of going in and working with a new principal.</p> <p>I think the county needs to offer more of it and more time so that the coach and the new principal really have time to dig in and do some work together.</p> <p>Having more time with her.</p> <p>I know that the quality of the coach is not always the same. So I think making sure that they have quality people in those positions.</p> <p>They're [the coaches] going to have so many different first year principals that all have different areas of need, some may be strong in one area but what they've got to be able to do is identify where</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situational coaching. How to handle situations that come up in the principal's school. • More coaches with less principals to handle. More 1-to-1 interaction. • More coaches to handle all the new principals. • More time for the coach and principal. • More time with the coach. • The qualifications of the coach are acceptable for them to be a coach. • Better pair of the coach and principal. Pairing coaches based on the needs of the principals and the strengths of the coaches.

Significant Phrases or Sentences and Their Formulated Meanings	
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<p>those strengths are, where their needs might be and then be able to provide them the support.</p> <p>I think it would be very, very critical to build a rapport, to make it easier to be transparent. I think it might be a cool thing for there to be some kind of setting where, an informal setting, a relaxed setting, a casual setting, that wasn't forced, for the coaches and the new principals to spark their relationship and begin establishing the rapport.</p> <p>Get the ball rolling in the summer so that by the time school's going well, there's a relationship there.</p> <p>When a principal starts July 1, they're coach needs to start with them July 1.</p> <p>I think that when pairing a coach with a school or a principal it is important to know that that particular coach comes in and understands the culture of your school, understands what you have contributed to the school and what you can contribute to the school, your knowledge of what you're doing.</p> <p>Maybe make the visitation not quite as lengthy but maybe a little, more frequent but not as in depth like maybe an hour visit twice a month as opposed to a three hour visit once a month.</p> <p>I would have liked to have seen her come in maybe twice a month for just a little</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting at the very beginning (not formal) to allow time for the principal and coach to get to know each other before coaching actually starts. • Placing coaches with principals sooner. • Placing coaches with principals as soon as they are hired. • Coaches needing to understand the environment of the school and what things the principal already brings to the table. • Changing time requirements for coaches and principals. • Time between coach and principal.

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<p>chunk as opposed to just one big chunk a month because so much goes on between month to month.</p> <p>Have the principal do their own perceived needs assessment of what they need going in to it and then if there is some kinds of needs assessment that the coach completed after maybe observing in the school and then develop a plan.</p> <p>We [the principals] really want to make sure you know what you're doing before you go into this role.</p> <p>It just needs to be more comprehensive in my opinion. Once a month is just not enough. New principals need constant contact and support and not just phone calls.</p> <p>It would have been nice to have a comprehensive, even if it was a day long, you know, here is your school's budget.</p> <p>Creating a checklist before school starts of things that need to be done and having the coach present before school starts to address those things.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better pairing of the coach and principal. • Coaches need to have credentials (experience, training). • More time for coaches and principals to meet. • More topics selected by principals; more principal input into topics being discussed at meetings. • Having something in place to get principals started for the year even if a coach has not been assigned yet.
<p>Interview Question #14</p> <p>It's a great program and I think that every principal should have it.</p> <p>Just starting sooner; being able to work a little bit over the summer.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaching is valuable to GCS principals. • Coaches need to be paired up sooner with principals.

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<p>I had a really good coach who was very supportive, who wasn't just going through the motions of coaching, who was really vested and interested in her principals.</p> <p>I think Guilford or any county that is truly interested in the success of their principals really needs to have a coaching model that they're going to work at, not just something we're going to do but they're really going to build a good coaching model which means getting coaches and investing again in the time of coaching.</p> <p>I think a lot of it has to depend specifically on the coach. If you've got a good coach, then you're going to have an excellent experience and you're also going to feel like you've been able to maximize what you can do.</p> <p>I think it shrunk my learning curve down significantly.</p> <p>I would support a mentoring program and even as a second year principal I think it would be good to continue to have one in some form or fashion.</p> <p>I enjoyed the coaching experience and it was helpful.</p> <p>I still have those critical colleagues that are easier to get a hold of now but I know that if I had an issue that I needed to talk with her about, she'd be there.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaches are into what their principals are doing and what is happening at the schools the principals serve. • Continued support by GCS for their new principals. Keep the program running. Continue getting high quality coaches and training. • Qualifications, experience and training of the coach. • Coaching helped with the "sink or swim" mentality. • Coaches need to continue for a second year. • Coaching was successful. • Creation of established networks that principals can contact when help is needed.

Significant Phrases or Sentences and Their Formulated Meanings	
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<p>I don't know how they matched us but I felt like it was a good fit.</p> <p>I didn't feel like we had enough time but that's just me but I didn't have a support system here and I didn't want to feel needing but at the same time that's just what I needed cause I didn't have it and there were a lot of things that I didn't understand and I was scared, really, to ask, I was afraid to ask people because of what folks would say or think and she confirmed that for me.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pairing of principal and coach. • More time with coach. Gave support when there was none. Giving principals someone to talk to when there was no one else they could talk to.

APPENDIX E

CATEGORY CLUSTERS

Category 1: Perception of new principal coaching expectations and needs prior to coaching

- **Sub- Theme 1: Coaching Expectations**
 - Relationship between individuals or a team
 - Where the specific needs of either the team or individual are addressed.
 - Guidance
 - Trainer
 - Someone to rely on
 - Honest feedback
 - Best interest
 - Model
 - Mentor
 - Someone to give corrective feedback
 - Active support
 - Advocacy
 - Being pushed, encouraged
 - Teacher
 - Helps maximize talents
- **Sub-Theme 2: New principal needs prior to coaching**
 - Time management
 - Navigating the duties of the principalship
 - Balancing the duties of the principalship
 - Structure coming into the principalship
 - Exposure as an AP to the principalship job
 - Following up on people you delegated jobs to
 - Balancing time and energy
 - Focusing on community and staff
 - How to handle low performing schools
 - How to handle poor teacher performance
 - Learning to delegate to others
 - Prioritizing issues

Category 2: Assessment of the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model Design

- **Sub-Theme 1: Design and management of the program**
 - Could have spent more time on issues facing the principals at that time
 - More principal input into topic decisions
 - Better organization
 - Creating a time/meeting for people about to become principals learn about what will be coming up when they step into the role
 - More training on school budgets
 - Checklist for principals when they start
- **Training provided to participants**
 - More situational coaching; walking through situations
 - Coaches and program provided good resources
 - Topics covered during monthly meetings were beneficial
 - Principals felt that more input for meeting topics
- **Sub-Theme 2: Collaboration time with coaches and other new principals**
 - Good being able to meet with the other participants that are also the new principals
 - Beneficial being able to talk with other new principals about their schools and issues they face
 - Time with coach was not enough
 - Coaches needed to meet new principals sooner
 - Informal meeting to meet coach to build rapport

Category 3: Interaction with the coach

- Talk through problems & able to offer suggestions/multiple perspectives
- Give feedback
- Completed school visits with walkthroughs
- Meeting on a regular basis (time was different for each principal however)
- Participated in new principal meetings (show support)
- Bringing articles on latest trends and ideas of the principalship and leadership
- Provided a therapist-type support
- Was easy to get in contact with
- Always encouraging
- Honest

- Comfortable to talk to without fear
- Relationship created had a purpose
- Could see the principal “in action”
- Good listener
- Available; easy to get a hold of
- Provided suggestions
- Excellent research
- Affirming
- Open
- Positive
- Wealth of experience
- Gave instructional support
- Effective
- Someone that understood the principal
- Being able to work through upcoming events
- Assistance in instructional support, how to handle struggling teachers, observations
- Instructional support for teachers
- Helped principal “think ahead”
- Being more reflective
- Confidence
- Gave ideas to try with school
- Refocus on things
- Making a schedule
- Being able to handle personnel issues
- Became a better listener
- More patient with individuals
- Some things need to be done on your own time
- Having more insight into happenings at the school
- You cannot be everything to everybody all the time

Category 4: New principals’ reflections of the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model

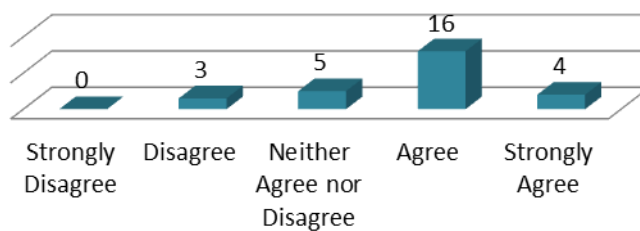
- **Sub-Theme 1: The new principal’s viewpoint of the coaching impact on the school**
 - Becoming a “cheerleader” for the school
 - Learning to understand the culture of the school
 - Gave the affirmation that you were on the right track
 - Be visible
 - Put teachers first, put students first, be a person for the school
 - Helped put systems in place for the school

- **Sub-Theme 2: The new principal's viewpoint of the coaching impact on them as an educational leader**
 - Helping turn around a low performing school
 - Learning to understand the culture of the school
 - Handling personnel issues
 - Prepared principal for success
 - Shrunk the "learning curve"

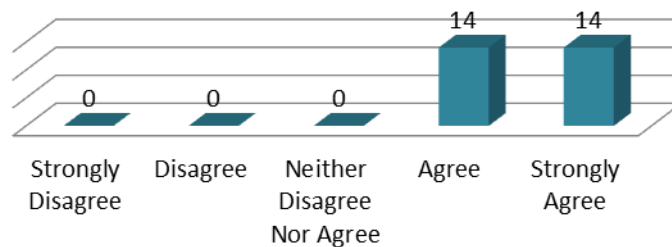
APPENDIX F

SURVEY RESULTS

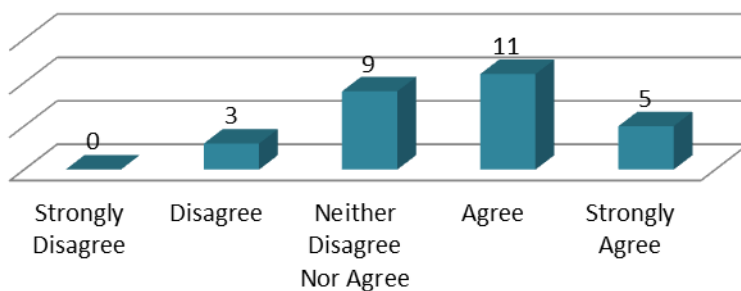
Question #1: My participation in in the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model helped me succeed as a new principal.



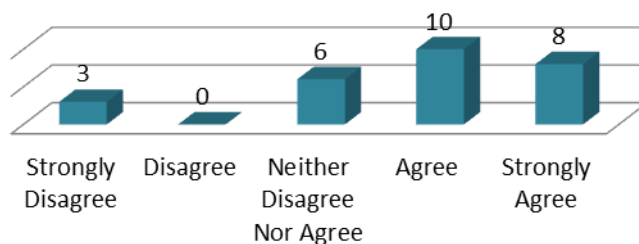
Question #2: My coach was available when I needed assistance.



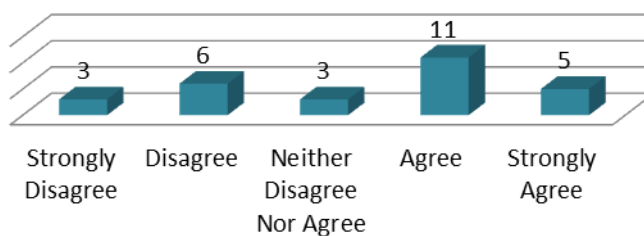
Question #3: The Guilford County Schools Coaching Model has a clear sense of direction.



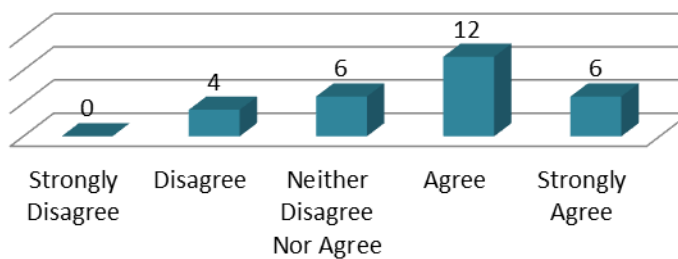
Question #4: The Guilford County Schools Coaching Model encouraged me to be a team player with other principals in my district.



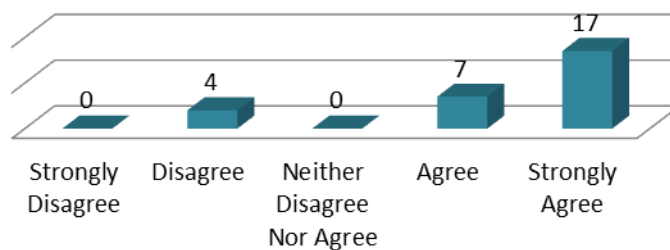
Question #5: The amount of time spent in coaching sessions with the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model was appropriate.



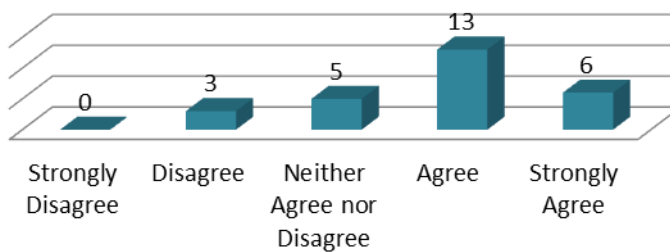
Question #6: The Guilford County Schools Coaching Model is set up so that people of diverse backgrounds can succeed.



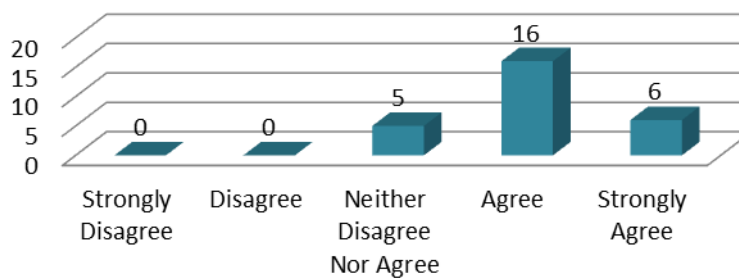
Question #7: I felt free to ask questions of my coach without fear of embarrassment (or negative consequences).



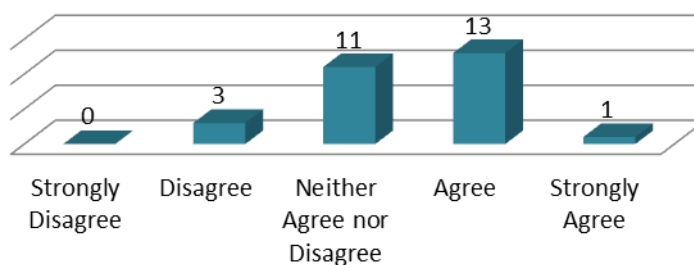
Question #8: The Guilford Schools Coaching Model encouraged me to come up with new and better ways of doing things.



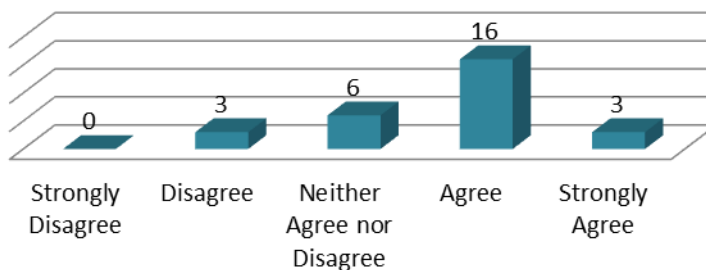
Question #9: The Coaching Model was set up/arranged/laid out in a way that was easy to understand.



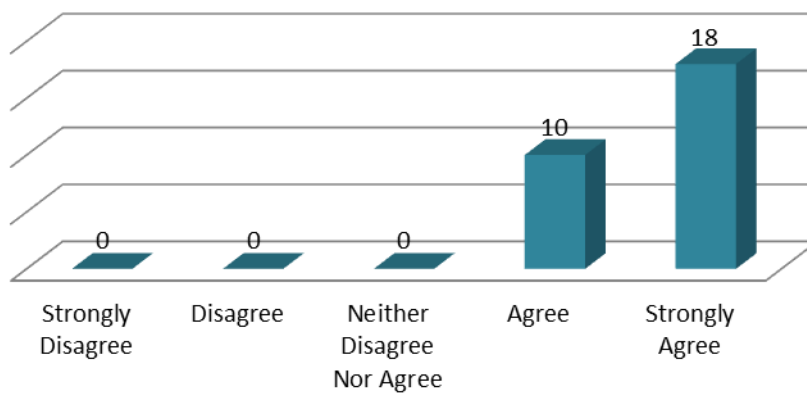
Question #10: Because of my Guilford County Schools coaching interaction, I have a clear understanding of what is expected of me as a principal and how to be successful.



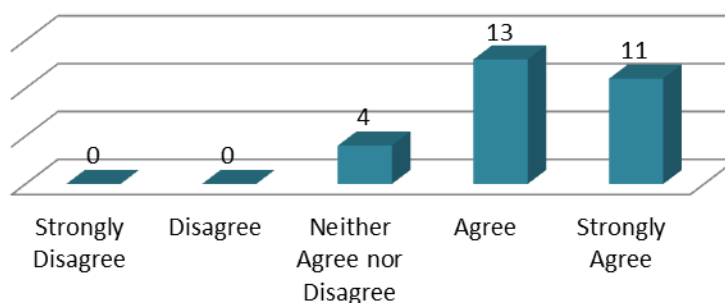
Question #11: The Guilford County Schools model educated me on making "the right" decision based on the needs of the students.



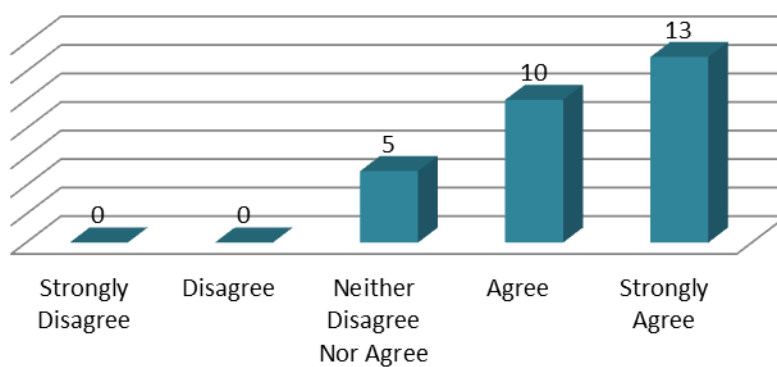
Question #12: My coach was willing to openly discuss and solve problems with me.



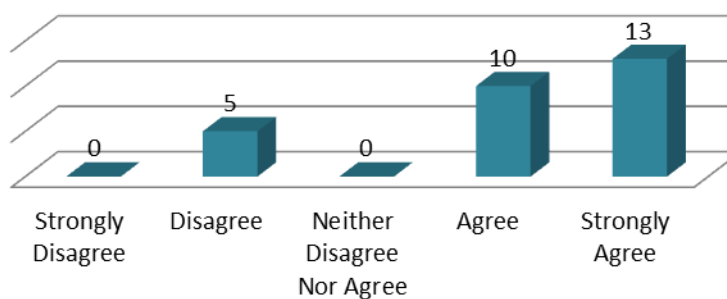
Question #13: The Guilford County Schools Coaching Model allows me the ability to use my own judgement in getting the job done.



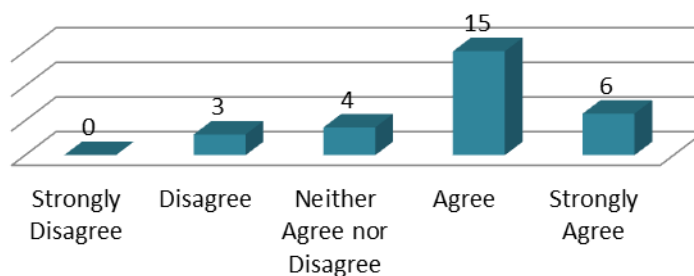
Question #14: My coach provided sufficient input into work related decisions.



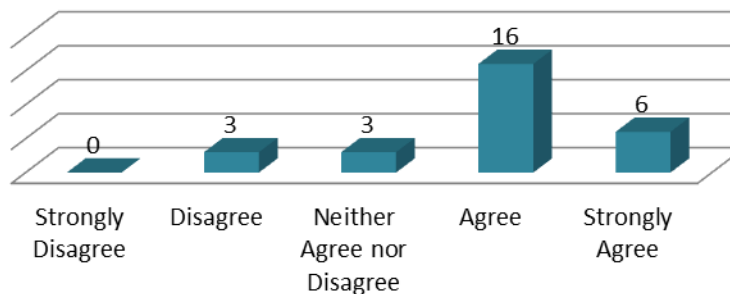
Question #15: I felt empowered by my coach to better serve my school.



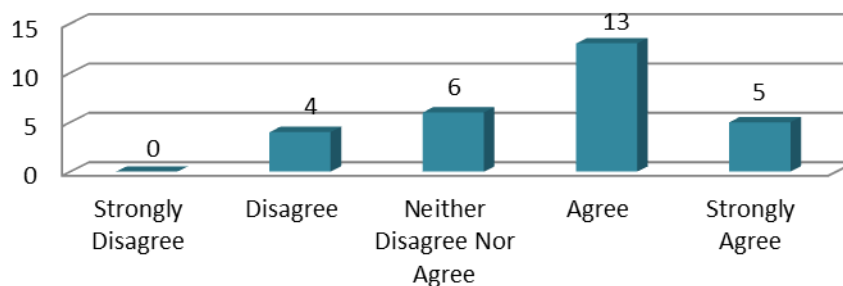
Question #16: I feel that my coaching experience provided me with the necessary information and resources to effectively do my job.



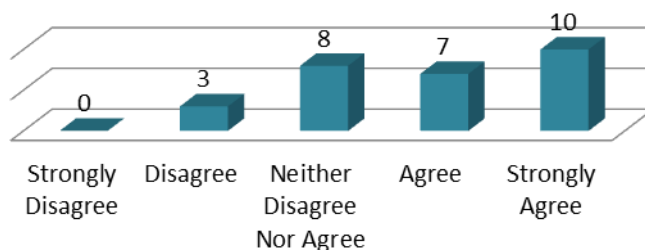
Question #17: Because of the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model, I understand how my role as a principal fits in with other areas of my school.



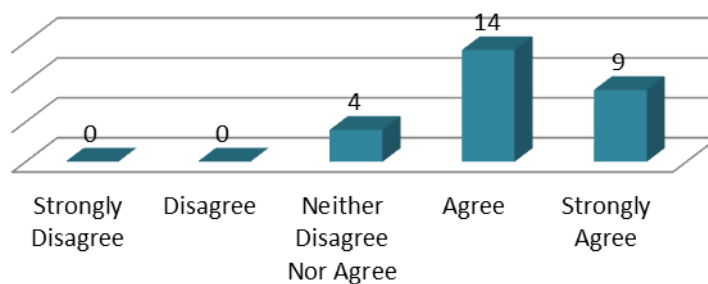
Question #18: The Guilford County Schools Coaching Model gave me timely and ongoing coaching and feedback regarding my performance.



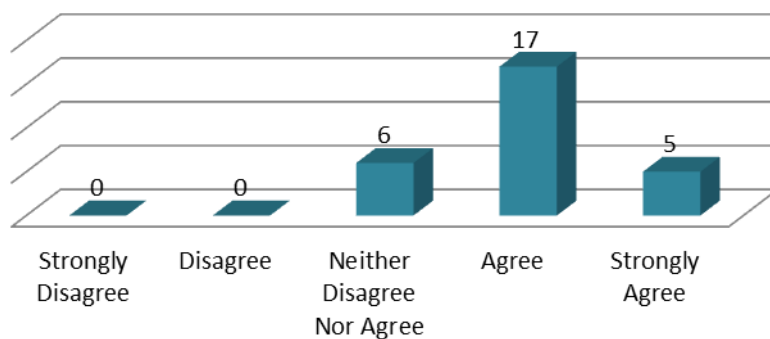
Question #19: When changes in the program are made, the communications are handled well (sufficient notice is given, credible explanation as to reason is given, etc.)



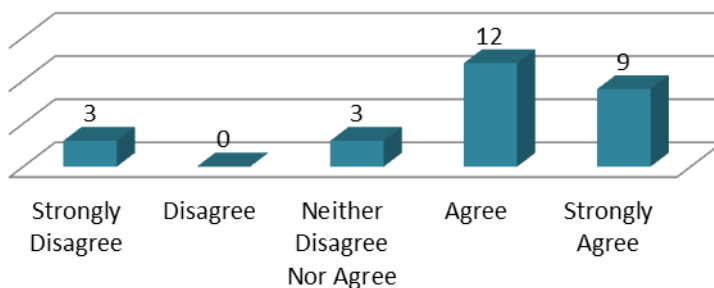
Question #20: I feel that Guilford County Schools Coaching Model strives for excellence in all aspects of education children.



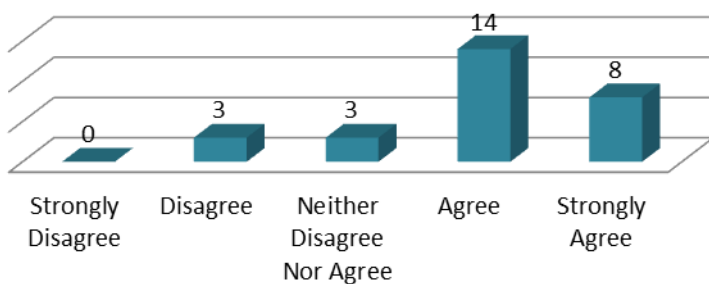
Question #21: I feel that the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model focuses on providing support for what children need to be successful.



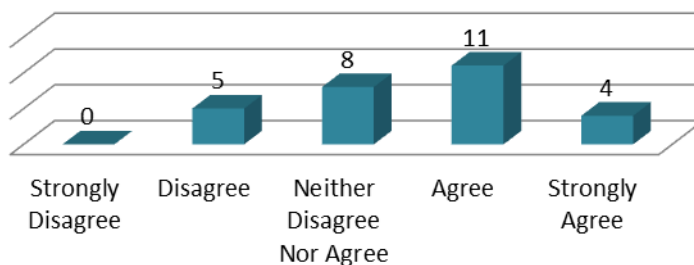
Question #22: Overall, I am/was pleased with the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model.



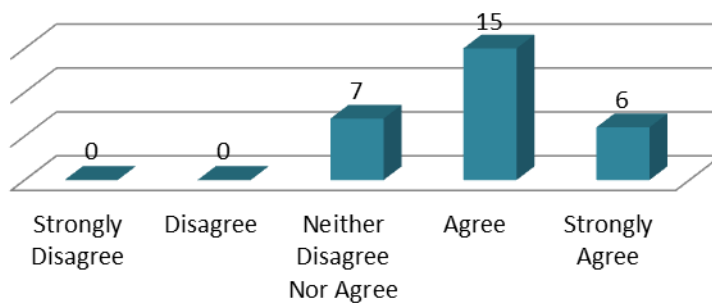
Question #23: My coach allowed me to continously learn and adapt to new situations.



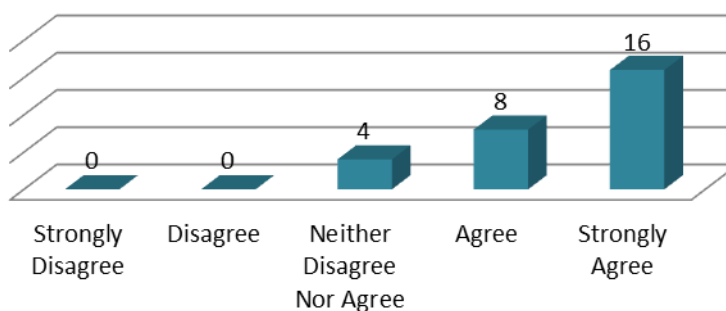
Question #24: I feel that the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model is innovative (seeking to develop and use new ideas, products, processes, operating methods, etc.)



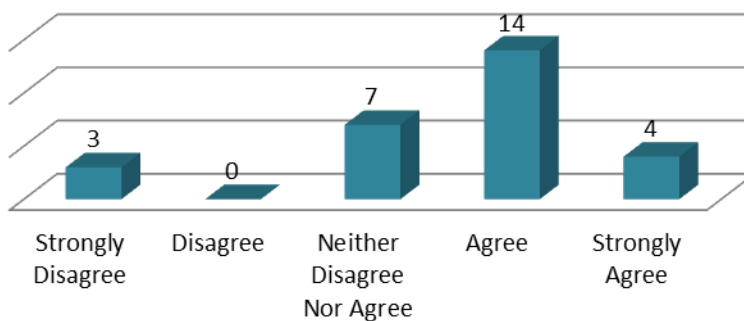
Question #25: I feel that the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model was effectively managed and well run.



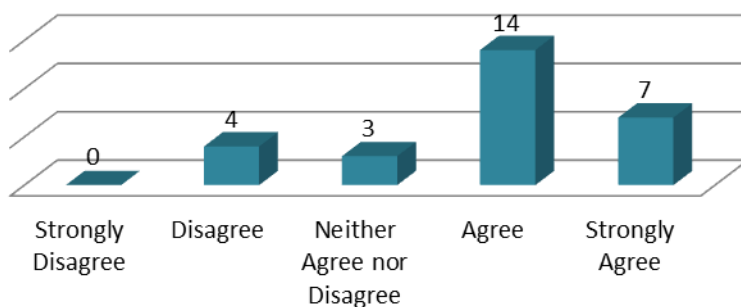
Question #26: My coach and I worked well together.



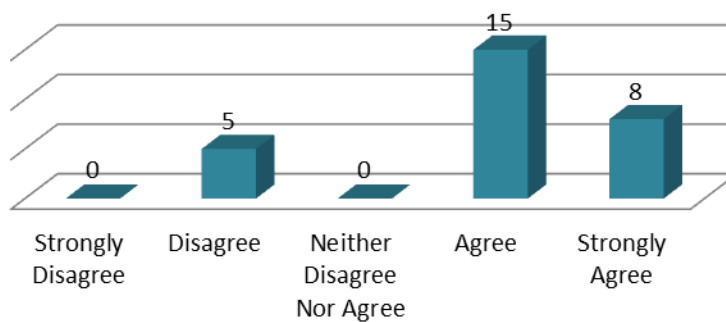
Question #27: The Guilford County Schools Coaching Model motivated me to go above and beyond in completing my responsibilities.



Question #28: The Guilford County Schools Coaching Model closely related information provided with the daily tasks I am required to accomplish.



Question #29: Overall, I am satisfied with the training (classroom, web, print materials, etc.) provided by the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model.



APPENDIX G

IRB CONSENT FORM



THE UNIVERSITY of NORTH CAROLINA
GREENSBORO

OFFICE OF RESEARCH INTEGRITY
2718 Beverly Cooper Moore and Irene Mitchell Moore
Humanities and Research Administration Bldg.
PO Box 26170
Greensboro, NC 27402-6170
336.256.1482
Web site: www.uncg.edu/orc
Federalwide Assurance (FWA) #216

To: Carl Lashley
Ed Ldrship and Cultural Found
342 School of Education Building

From: UNCG IRB


Authorized signature on behalf of IRB

Approval Date: 1/11/2013

Expiration Date of Approval: 1/10/2014

RE: Notice of IRB Approval by Expedited Review (under 45 CFR 46.110)

Submission Type: Initial

Expedited Category: 7.Surveys/interviews/focus groups,6.Voice/image research recordings

Study #: 12-0389

Study Title: Through Their Eyes: Perceptions on the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model for New Principals at the Time of Coaching

This submission has been approved by the IRB for the period indicated. It has been determined that the risk involved in this research is no more than minimal.

Study Description:

The purpose of this study is to examine the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model currently utilized to support principals from the perspective of the principals themselves.

Study Specific Details:

- Your study is approved and is in compliance with federal regulations and UNCG IRB Policies. Please note that you will also need to remain in compliance with the university Access To and Data Retention Policy which can be found at http://policy.uncg.edu/research_data/.

Investigator's Responsibilities

Federal regulations require that all research be reviewed at least annually. It is the Principal Investigator's responsibility to submit for renewal and obtain approval before the expiration date. You may not continue any research activity beyond the expiration date without IRB approval. Failure to receive approval for continuation before the expiration date will result in automatic termination of the approval for this study on the expiration date.

Signed letters, along with stamped copies of consent forms and other recruitment materials will be scanned to you in a separate email. These consent forms must be used unless the IRB has given you approval to waive this requirement.

You are required to obtain IRB approval for any changes to any aspect of this study before they can be implemented (use the modification application available at <http://www.uncg.edu/orc/irb.htm>). Should any adverse event or unanticipated problem involving risks to subjects or others occur it must be reported immediately to the IRB using the "Unanticipated Problem/Event" form at the same website.

CC:
ORC, (ORC), Non-IRB Review Contact

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT GREENSBORO

Project Title: *Through Their Eyes: Perceptions on the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model for New Principals at the Time of Coaching*

Project Director: Michael Ferrell

Participant's Name: _____

What is the study about?

This is a research project. The purpose of this study is to examine the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model currently utilized to support new principals from the perspective of the principals themselves. The study will examine how different new principals experienced the coaching model and the impacts made by the coaching program for new principals.

Why are you asking me?

I am asking you to participate as a participant who has experienced the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model in the first four years of implementation.

What will you ask me to do if I agree to be in the study?

If you agree to participate in this study, completion of a survey and possible interview will be asked of you. The survey should last between 30 minutes to 1 hour. The individual interview should last 1 ½ hours to 3 hours. If additional information is required from you as a participant, notification will be made to you about what specific additional information is needed.

Is there any audio/video recording?

All interviews will be audio recorded. All audio tapes will be stored in a locked cabinet in my possession and will be destroyed three years after the conclusion of this study. Because your voice will be potentially identifiable by anyone who hears the tape, your confidentiality for things you say on the tape cannot be guaranteed although the researcher will try to limit access to the tape. Only the principal researcher and I will have access to the recordings.

What are the dangers to me?

The Institutional Review Board at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro has determined that participation in this study poses minimal risk to participants. Your interview may reveal opinions and possible objections about a program that is currently in use in the Guilford County Schools system. However, you will not be identified in the study nor will your job location be revealed in the study. The school district will be identified because of the uniqueness of the Coaching Model to Guilford County Schools. If you have any concerns about your rights, how you are being treated or if you have questions, want more information or have suggestions, please contact the Office of Research Compliance at UNCG toll-free at (855)-251-2351. Questions, concerns or complaints about this project or benefits or risks associated with being in this study can be answered by Dr. Carl Lashley, principal investigator who may be contacted at (336) 334-3745.

Are there any benefits to society as a result of me taking part in this research?

With your participation in this study, the education profession may better understand the need for coaching of novice principals.

Are there any benefits to me for taking part in this research study?

UNCG IRB
Approved Consent Form

Valid 1/11/13 to 1/10/14

As a participant, you may benefit from helping future principals and coaches and gaining personal reflective insight into the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model. Provided information by you could potentially impact changes in the coaching model. There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this study.

Will I get paid for being in the study? Will it cost me anything?

There are no costs to you or payments made for participating in this study.

How will you keep my information confidential?

All information obtained in this study is strictly confidential unless disclosure is required by law. Any discussions related to interviews and findings will be limited to the doctoral advisor setting at UNC-Greensboro. Pseudonyms will also be used in order to protect the identity of any research participants. Absolute confidentiality through the Internet cannot be guaranteed due to the limited protections of Internet access. Please be sure to close your browser when finished so no one will be able to see what you have been doing.

The student researcher has procured a secured (locked) filing cabinet where all data and materials will be stored at his home in Burlington, NC. Only the researcher has a key to this secure cabinet. The principal investigator will maintain an original copy of the consent forms in a locked filing cabinet on the UNCG campus. After three years, all audio tapes shall be deleted and then crushed. Likewise, all written documents related to this study, including consent forms, will be shredded. Electronic files shall be permanently deleted from the hard drive and recycle bin.

What if I want to leave the study?

You have the right to refuse to participate or to withdraw at any time, without penalty. If you do withdraw, it will not affect you in any way. If you choose to withdraw, you may request that any of your data which has been collected be destroyed unless it is in a de-identifiable state.

What about new information/changes in the study?

If significant new information relating to the study becomes available which may relate to your willingness to continue to participate, this information will be provided to you.

Voluntary Consent by Participant:

By signing this consent form you are agreeing that you read, or it has been read to you, and you fully understand the contents of this document and are openly willing consent to take part in this study. All of your questions concerning this study have been answered. By signing this form, you are agreeing that you are 18 years of age or older and are agreeing to participate, or have the individual specified above as a participant participate, in this study described to you by Michael Ferrell, student researcher.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

UNCG IRB
Approved Consent Form

Valid 1/11/13 to 1/10/14

APPENDIX H
GCS CONSENT



December 13, 2012

Michael Ferrell
664-1 Boone Station Drive
Burlington, NC 27215

Re: 121346

Dear Michael Ferrell:

The Guilford County Schools Research Review Committee has concluded that your proposal *Through Their Eyes: Perceptions on the Guilford County Schools Coaching Model for New Principals at the Time of Coaching* (revised 12/11/12) meets the requirements of state legislation and the current research policy of Guilford County Schools.

Committee approval does not guarantee access to schools or individuals, nor does it imply that a study can or will be conducted. Access to a list of new principals is not guaranteed. You will need to make contact with appropriate district staff to determine if they can or will supply said list. Principals and district staff decide independently whether they wish to participate. The committee expects that identities of individuals, schools, and the district will remain anonymous at all stages of the project.

Please present this letter upon initial contact with principals and other district staff. Contact me at 336-370-2346 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Carolyn Gilbert".

Carolyn Gilbert
Co-Chair, Research Review Committee